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# THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF INDIA

EDITED BY

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THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF INDIA

# THE HINDU RELIGIOUS YEAR

BY

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TO

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# PREFACE

A FEW years ago I published a small book under the name of *The Hindu Year: a Primer on the Hindu Calendar of Mahārāshṭra*. It consisted of the Calendar which forms Chapter VII of the present book, with very short comments in the form of footnotes.

It was pointed out by several readers at the time that there was room for a much fuller book on the same subject, which, while dealing in detail with customs in Mahārāshṭra, should describe the festivals common to the whole of Hindu India, and so prove useful to a much wider circle. An attempt to do this has been made in the present book.

A mere list of feasts is unsatisfactory. Some attempt to trace customs back to their sources is necessary. The study of Anthropology in India still leaves large fields untouched, and much yet remains to be done. But in Chapters III to VI, the existing feasts have been related in each case to what I believe to be their origins, whether Sun worship with resultant Seasonal feasts, Moon worship with resultant Monthly feasts, Planet worship, the worship of Śiva and Vishṇu, or the worship of Animistic deities.

Chapter I deals with the Hindu method of reckoning time, Chapter II with Auspicious and Inauspicious seasons, while Chapter VIII applies only to Mahārāshṭra, being a list, with notes, of the principal Religious Fairs of the country.

It would be interesting and useful if similar lists of local fairs, descriptions of local variations in the observance of the main Hindu festivals, and an account of purely local feasts could be drawn up for each province in India, and it is hoped that there may be forthcoming those able and willing to undertake these tasks.

Apart from such local details, the festivals, as described in the present book, are, I believe, common to the whole of Hindu India.

*March*, *1921*.

Nāśik, India. M. M. UNDERHILL.

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| | |
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| ,, ,, ,, ,, *Hindus* .. .. .. | *S.B.H.* |
| *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics* .. .. | *E.R.E.* |
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## CHAPTER I

### ON ERAS, AND OTHER DIVISIONS OF TIME

IN order to understand the system of appointing feasts, fasts, and other religious ceremonies, for certain days, it is necessary to get a grasp of the Hindu method of reckoning time. Various measures of time are used, *e.g.* Age, Era, Solar and Lunar Year, Solar and Lunar Month, Solar and Lunar Day, and Divisions of a Day.

Again, one must understand the rules for adjusting solar and lunar time.

Therefore these matters are first dealt with.

*Kalpa* and *Pralaya*. Hindus conceive the lapse of infinite time as broken into vast recurrent periods, known as *Kalpa* and *Pralaya*, *i.e.* Existence and Dissolution. During a Kalpa the world and all its inhabitants exist, while during a Pralaya the world and all beings are in a state of invisible and unconscious dissolution.

When the world is reproduced, at the beginning of a Kalpa, all beings and things are at their very best, but during the course of the Kalpa they gradually worsen and decay, until at the close nothing is possible but the blank dissolution of Pralaya. This steady process of degradation is then vividly represented by the division of the period into four ages, each succeeding age marking a great fall in virtue, capacity and happiness, as compared with the preceding age. These four ages, *yugas*, are named from dice, the first being the four, the second the three, the two, the last the ace; and the time each lasts is in proportion to

these figures. The unit is taken as being 1,200 divine years. The relation of divine to human time is represented in this table:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 solar year | = 1 day and night of the gods. | |
| 30 days of the gods | = 1 month of the gods | = 30 solar years. |
| 12 months of the gods | = 1 year of the gods | = 360 solar years. |

Thus the original scheme of the Kalpa seems to have been:

| *The Ages* | | *Years of the Gods* | *Solar Years* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The Kṛita yuga | *i.e.* the 4 | = 4,800 | = 1,728,000 |
| 2. The Tretā yuga | *i.e.* the 3 | = 3,600 | = 1,296,000 |
| 3. The Dvāpara yuga | *i.e.* the 2 | = 2,400 | = 864,000 |
| 4. The Kali yuga | *i.e.* the ace | = 1,200 | = 432,000 |

Each yuga is said to begin when the Sun, the Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn are all at the initial point of the ecliptic.

Later, the scheme was further elaborated. The four ages taken together were called a *Mahāyuga* or Great Age; and a Kalpa was held to cover a thousand Mahāyugas; so that the length of a Kalpa came to be 4,320,000,000 solar years.

We are said to be living at present in the Kali yuga, hastening downwards in degradation to utter dissolution The age is believed to have run some 5,020 of the 432,000 years of its total course.

*Eras.* There are several eras reckoned among Hindus at the present day, but the great majority follow one of two,[1] either the *Śaka* or the *Samvat* (or Samvatsara).

The Samvat[2] is popularly believed to have been established by one, Vikramāditya, King of Ujjain, to commemorate his victory over the Śaka kings in the year 3044 of the Kali yuga (57 B.C.). Hence the current year (A.D. 1921) is, according to Samvat reckoning, 1977. Professor Kielhorn,[3] however, states

[1] Institutes of Vishṇu, *S.B.E.*, VII, p. 77, etc.
[2] *Book of Indian Eras*, p. 47 ff. So also Molesworth, संवत.
[3] *I.A.*, XX, p. 399.

that the era was known until at least the eighth century A.D. as "the Mālava time, or era," and that no mention of any king Vikramāditya is met with earlier than A.D. 842, the 898th year of the era, and that, consequently, it cannot either have been established by, or invented to commemorate the memory of, any such king.

His theory is that, as the Vikrama-samvat year began in the autumn, at the time when kings renewed their campaigns, it became known as the "Vikrama kāla," *i.e.* "the time of prowess," and was described as such by poets. Later on, the true origin having been forgotten, people invented a mythical king, Vikramāditya, to account for the name of the era.

Dr. Fleet[1] says the era started in 58 B.C., in the reign of the Kushan king, Kanishka, was established as an era by his successor, and accepted by the Mālava people; but Dr. Vincent Smith[2] says that King Kanishka, from numismatic evidence, almost certainly may be placed from A.D. 120 to 125, and cannot therefore have been the founder of the Vikrama era.

On the other hand, Mr. K. P. Jayaswal,[3] writing as lately as April, 1918, insists on the historicity of Vikrama, who took captive, and ended the rule of, Nahapāna, the Śaka king of popular tradition, which the New Jaina datum places at 58 B.C. The question, therefore, of the origin of the Vikrama-samvat era cannot be said to be solved.

The *Śaka* era, again, is said to date from a king Śālivāhana,[4] ruler of the Śaka people, and founded in A.D. 78. Hence the current year (A.D. 1921) is Śaka 1843. But there were more than one king of this name and possibly the era was not founded by any one of them. Dr. Fleet[5] merely says that the Śaka era was founded in A.D. 78, by a king of Kāthiāvār and Ujjain, and Dr. Vincent Smith[6] describes the Śaka people as a

[1] *Imp. Gaz.*, II, p. 5.
[2] *Early Hist. of India*, p. 225.
[3] *I.A.*, XLVII, p. 112.
[4] *Book of Indian Eras*, p. 47.
[5] *Imp. Gaz.*, II, p. 14.
[6] *Imp. Gaz.*, II, p. 288.

tribe who immigrated into Seistān and North India, where they founded a dynasty between 100 B.C. and A.D. 50.

The common Hindu Pañchāṅga, or calendar, follows the Śaka reckoning, but the use of the different eras to compute the date of any given year is not so confusing as might be supposed. The names, order, etc., of months and days occurring within the year are not affected, and it is a simple matter to affix the name of the era followed before any quoted date. For example, April 9, 1921, might be quoted either as "Śaka 1843 Chaitra Śuklapaksha Pratipadā," or as "Samvat 1977 Chaitra," etc.

*The Luni-Solar Year, or Samvatsara.* From early years the Āryans appear to have reckoned time by both sun and moon. In the Institutes of Vishṇu[1] and in Manu's Code[2] are found references to both sun and moon as determining days and hours for the observance of fasts and other religious rites. And it appears that two modes of computing the space of a year were recognised, one being measured by the time taken by the sun to pass through the twelve signs of the zodiac, the other being the somewhat shorter year, consisting of twelve lunar months (about 354 days).

The two systems were united into one, the present luni-solar or Samvatsara year, about 1181[3] B.C. The first day of the solar year is the day of the entry of the sun into the zodiacal sign Mesha (Aries) at the Vernal equinox, and the actual beginning of the civil and religious year is, in general, dated from the new moon immediately preceding that day. The old Vikrama-samvat year began with the autumn equinox.

The year consists of twelve lunar months, with an intercalary month inserted about every two and a half years (for which see below), so that, although no one year coincides as to the number of days with a year of

[1] *S.B.E.*, VII, pp. 77, 240, etc. [2] *S.B.E.*, I, p. 64.
[3] *Chronology Tables*, V, Tarlankar and Sarasvati.

the Christian era, the variation and periodical correction cause a close approximation to it.

The ecliptic is divided into twelve solar mansions, or Rāśi, identical with the signs of the zodiac known to the West ; and also into twenty-seven lunar mansions, or asterisms, known as Nakshatra. Bentley[1] says the formation of these lunar mansions was the most ancient of Hindu astronomical calculations. The nakshatra are not all equal in size, some consist of only one or two stars. Chitrā the fourteenth consists of one star only, *i.e.* Spica. Each rāśi contains two or three nakshatra. There is also a short interposed interval, known as Abhijit,[2] between the twenty-first and twenty-second nakshatra, for the moon's duration in each nakshatra is slightly in excess of one day. Abhijit gathers up the month's daily excess. Some old authorities give twenty-seven nakshatra, some twenty-eight.

The sun completes its (apparent) journey through the heavens in one year, passing through one rāśi and about two and a quarter nakshatra each month. The moon's (apparent) journey through the heavens is much quicker, the whole being completed in a single month. It follows that the moon travels through just more than one nakshatra every solar day, becoming full in a different nakshatra each month, and the present names of the months are formed from the nakshatra in which the moon was full in the year of the institution of the present luni-solar year.

Lunar names for the months are in more general use, although the solar names (from the zodiacal signs) are met with sometimes. The table given below shows the relation of solar and lunar months to the nakshatra. The year begins with the new moon of Chaitra, which immediately precedes the entry of the sun into Mesha, and which takes its name from the fourteenth nakshatra, Chitrā.

[1] *Historical View of Hindu Astronomy*, p. 1.
[2] Thibaut, "Astronomie," *E.I.A.R.*, p. 23.

| *Solar* | *Lunar* | *Nakshatra* |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Mesha (Aries) | Chaitra | 14th Chitrā<br>15th Svāti |
| 2. Vṛishabha (Taurus) | Vaiśākha | 16th Viśākhā<br>17th Anurādhā |
| 3. Mithuna (Gemini) | Jyeshṭha | 18th Jyeshṭhā<br>19th Mūla |
| 4. Karka (Cancer) | Āshāḍha | 20th Pūrva Āshāḍhā<br>21st Uttara Āshāḍhā<br>and(Abhijit) (Balance) |
| 5. Siṁha (Leo) | Śrāvaṇa | (Abhijit) 22nd Śravaṇā<br>23rd Dhanishṭhā |
| 6. Kanyā (Virgo) | Bhādrapada | 24th Śatatārakā<br>25th Pūrvabhādrapadā<br>26th Uttarabhādrapadā |
| 7. Tulā (Libra) | Āśvina | 27th Revatī<br>1st Aśvinī<br>2nd Bharaṇī |
| 8. Vṛiśchika (Scor.) | Kārttika | 3rd Kṛittikā<br>4th Rohiṇī |
| 9. Dhanu (Sagitt.) | Mārgaśīrsha | 5th Mṛigaśiras<br>6th Ārdrā |
| 10. Makara (Capri.) | Pausha | 7th Punarvasu<br>8th Pushya |
| 11. Kumbha (Aqua.) | Māgha | 9th Aśleshā<br>10th Maghā |
| 12. Mīna (Pisces) | Phālguna | 11th Pūrva Phalgunī<br>12th Uttara Phalgunī<br>13th Hasta |

## Nakshatra and English Equivalent Stars[1]

| *Nakshatra* | *No. of Stars* | *Chief Star* |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Āsvinī | 3 | $\alpha$ or $\beta$ Arietis |
| 2. Bharaṇī | 3 | $\alpha$ Muscae |
| 3. Kṛittikā | 6 | $\eta$ Tauri (Pleiades) |
| 4. Rohiṇī | 5 | $\alpha$ Tauri (Aldebaran) |
| 5. Mṛigaśiras | 3 | $\lambda$ Orionis |
| 6. Ārdrā | 1 | $\alpha$ Orionis |
| 7. Punarvasu | 4 | $\beta$ Geminorum |
| 8. Pushya | 3 | $\delta$ Cancri |
| 9. Aśleshā | 5 | $\alpha$ Cancri or $\epsilon$ Hydrae |
| 10. Maghā | 5 | $\alpha$ Leonis (Regulus) |

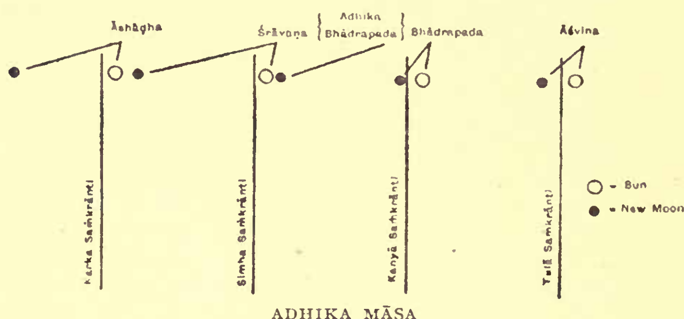
[1] Colebrooke, *Miscell, Essays*, II, p. 321 ff.; and Brāhma Gupte.

| *Nakshatra* | *No. of Stars* | *Chief Star* |
|---|---|---|
| 11. Pūrva Phalgunī | 2 | δ Leonis |
| 12. Uttara ,, | 2 | β Leonis (Denebola) |
| 13. Hasta | 5 | γ or δ Corvi |
| 14. Chitrā | 1 | α Virginis (Spica) |
| 15. Svāti | 1 | α Bootis (Arcturus) |
| 16. Viśākhā | 4 | α, χ or ι Librae |
| 17. Anurādhā | 4 | δ Scoripionis |
| 18. Jyeshṭhā | 3 | α Scorpionis (Antares) |
| 19. Mūla | 11 | λ, γ or υ Scorpionis |
| 20. Pūrva Āshāḍha | 2 | δ Sagittarii |
| 21. Uttara ,, | 2 | σ or τ Sagittarii |
| 22. (Abhijit) | 3 | α Lyrae |
| 23. Śravaṇā | 3 | α Aquilae (Altair) |
| 24. Dhanishṭhā | 4 | α Delphini |
| 25. Śatabhishā | 100 | λ Aquari |
| 26. Pūrva Bhādrapadā | 2 | α Pegasi |
| 27. Uttara ,, | 2 | α or γ Andromedae |
| 28. Revatī | 32 | ζ Piscium |

*Intercalary and Deleted Months.* The nakshatra are not all of the same extent, and the motion of the moon varies. Also the time taken by the sun in passing through a zodiacal sign varies. It, therefore, sometimes happens that two new moons occur, or that no new moon occurs, within a solar month. The latter event is much more rare than the former, occurring only once or twice in a century, while the former occurs about once every two and a half years.

The entry of the sun into a zodiacal sign is called a Saṁkrānti. If a new moon occurs immediately after a saṁkrānti, a second new moon may occur immediately before the following saṁkrānti. And since each solar month takes the name of the immediately preceding lunar month, a difficulty of nomenclature arises, for two new moons have occurred since the last saṁkrānti. In such a case, the former of the two months under consideration is called an Adhika (extra) month, the latter taking the customary name.

The following diagram[1] illustrates what occurred in the Samvatsara 1973 (beginning March 24th, 1917).




ADHIKA MĀSA

The adhika month is sometimes called Malamāsa (unclean month), and is considered unpropitious. For all religious purposes it is considered a mensis non. The only cases in which a malamāsa is recognised as having a status of its own are: (1) When it occurs as Adhika Chaitra. The year then begins with the new moon of Adhika Chaitra, not with that of Chaitra proper.

(2) When it occurs as Adhika[2] Jyeshṭha the Daśaharā must be kept in Adhika, not in ordinary Jyeshṭha.

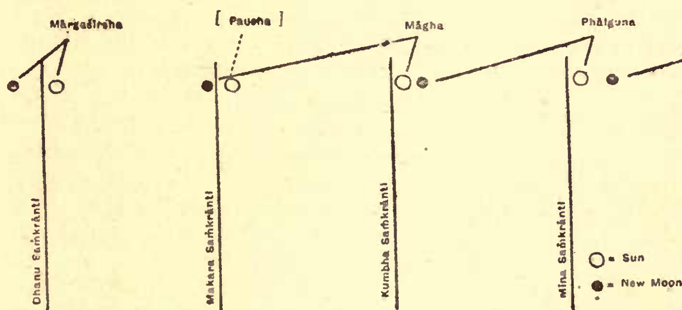
(3) The Kokila worship (Chap. VI, p. 117) is only performed in an Adhika Āshāḍha month.

(2) Alex. Cunningham[3] records that he has only met with one inscription in an intercalary month. Inscriptions relating to grants of land, etc., would bear the date of the day the grant was made, usually on a festival. The absence of such malamāsa dates points to the fact that festivals do not occur in such a month.

At rare intervals, the sun being in perigee, and a lunar month being at its longest, it may happen that a new moon immediately precedes a saṁkrānti, and that the following saṁkrānti occurs before the moon is

[1] *Hindu Year*, p. 4. [2] Sharmā, p. 63.
[3] *Book of Indian Eras*, p. 5.

again new. In such a case the name of the first of the two lunar months[1] is deleted, and it is called a Nija or (more commonly) a Kshaya month. It has been aptly said: "The lunar months are *doors* to the Indian calendar, but the solar months are *hinges* on which the doors move. In the year 1 B.C. there is no new moon between the two saṁkrānti at 246·3192d. and 275·636d. (*i.e.* between Makara saṁkrānti and Kumbha saṁkrānti) and therefore the lunar month which has no hinge to turn on is shut; this fact is expressed by




KSHAYA MĀSA

saying that Pausha lunar month is Kshaya, or suppressed!"[2]

The diagram on this page illustrates the above.

When a Kshayamāsa occurs, the actual number of lunar months in the year is always completed to twelve or thirteen, as one, or two, intercalary months will occur in the same year.

The last Kshayamāsa was in Śaka 1744 (A.D. 1822), it will next occur in Śaka 1885 (A.D. 1963).[3]

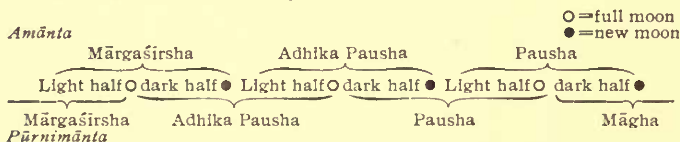
*Formation of the Month.* From the earliest times the month has been regarded as consisting of two parts

[1] So Pillai and also Joshi's *Hundred Year Pañchāṅga.*
[2] Pillai, *Indian Chronology*, p. 8.
[3] *Bom. Gaz.*, XVIII, p. 241.

or Paksha, called the Śuklapaksha (light half), and Kṛishṇapaksha (dark half). The word paksha means a wing, and calls up a mental picture of the new, or full, moon as the body of a bird, with the waxing and waning periods outspread on either side, as wings. In some parts of India the month begins with the light half, on the day following the new moon, and ends with the day of the following new moon, which closes the dark half. This is known as the Amānta system, and is current in South India, Bengal and Mahārāshṭra ; this system is followed in the present book. In Hindusthān and Telingāna the Pūrṇimānta system is followed. This starts with the dark half, the day after the full moon, and ends with the day of the succeeding full moon.

One curious inconsistency arises from the use of the Pūrṇimānta system. The month beginning with the dark half, the new moon occurs in the middle of the month. So that in the case of the month Chaitra, the first month of the year, its first half lies in the preceding year ; for the Amānta system is used throughout India in reckoning the beginning of the Samvatsara.

The two systems are illustrated in the following diagram, which also shows the modern manner of reckoning an intercalary month :

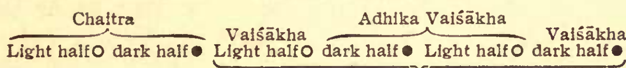



It will be seen from the above that the light halves of the months are always known by the same names under both Amānta and Pūrṇimānta systems, but that the names of the dark halves differ.

Ceremonies appointed for a certain day will be held on the same day all over India, but the name by which the day is designated will differ according to the system followed. For example, if Makara Saṁkrānti occurs on the second of the light half of Pausha, it would be described in both systems as Pausha śukla-

paksha dvitīyā, but if it occurred on the second of the (amānta) dark half of Pausha, it would be described by followers of the Pūrṇimānta system as Māgha kṛishṇa paksha dvitīyā.

The Sūrya Siddhānta, dealing with Āryan astronomy and believed[1] to have been known from the fourth or fifth century A.D., followed the Amānta system, but gave a curious method of placing the intercalary month, embedding it, as it were, in the middle of the normal month whose name it shared, as follows :




*Lunar Days, or Tithi.* A lunar month consists of 30 lunar days, or Tithi, subject to intercalation or expunging when related to solar days.

The moon[2] has an (apparent) path of 360° round the sun, hence one tithi equals 12°, the *amount* of a tithi is therefore a constant, but owing to the eliptical form of the moon's orbit it takes a varying time to travel the requisite 12°, and the *duration* of a tithi is therefore a variable, the variation amounting to about four and a half hours.

*Solar Days, or Divasa.* The Hindus recognise nine "planets" or Graha, *viz.* Sūrya, Ravi or Āditya (Sun), Chandra or Soma (Moon), Maṅgala or Bhauma (Mars), Buddha or Saumya (Mercury), Guru or Bṛihaspati (Jupiter), Śukra (Venus), Śani (Saturn), Rāhu (ascending node), and Ketu (descending node).

The week of seven days named from the planets, which is in use in Europe, is also used in India. The origin of this institution is of considerable importance.

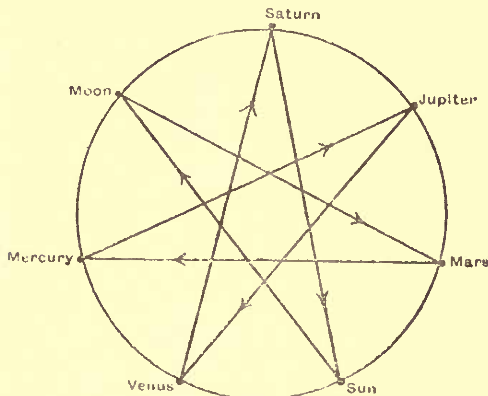
The seven days' week is a very old institution, being found in Israel, Babylonia and Egypt in pre-Christian centuries. India may, therefore, have known and used it. But the naming of the seven days of the week

[1] *Sanskrit Literature*, A. A. Macdonell, p. 435 ; *Imp. Gaz.*, II, p. 265.

[2] *Indian Calendar*, Sewell and Dikshit, p. 3 n.

from the planets is not very old; for it arose in Egypt in the second century B.C. from Greek astrology.

The order of the planets among the Greeks was as follows: (1) Saturn, (2) Jupiter, (3) Mars, (4) Sun, (5) Venus, (6) Mercury, (7) Moon, being the order of their seeming distance above the earth, beginning with the highest. When the planets were first used astrologically, they were applied to the hours of the day as Lords, Saturn being Lord of the first hour, Jupiter of the second, and so on.



THE LORDS OF THE DAYS

When this system became common in Egypt, where a seven days' week was in use, someone, noticing that there were seven planets and seven days in the week, conceived the idea of making each planet the Lord of one day of the week. Necessarily Saturn, the first planet, became the Lord of the first day of the week. But being also Lord of the first hour of the day, he was Lord of the eighth, fifteenth and twenty-second hours of the day as well. If then we reckon on, we find that the twenty-fifth hour, *i.e.* the first hour of the following day, falls under the rule of the Sun, and, therefore, Sunday follows Saturn-day. A similar calculation fixes the Lords of the other days, as is shown by the diagram. We thus reach a week which runs Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday.

The new planetary week, beginning with Sunday, came into use, in the Roman Empire, seemingly in the

second century A.D., and probably as a result of the popularity of Sun worship at the time. The order of the planetary days remained unchanged.

Here are the Indian names of the days of the week in accordance with the system:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Sunday | (Sun-day) | Ravi or Ādityavāra |
| Monday | (Moon-day) | Chandra or Somavāra |
| Tuesday | (Mars-day) | Maṅgala or Bhaumavāra |
| Wednesday | (Mercury-day) | Buddha or Saumyavāra |
| Thursday | (Jupiter-day) | Bṛihaspat or Guruvāra |
| Friday | (Venus-day) | Śukravāra |
| Saturday | (Saturn-day) | Śanivāra |

Fleet argues that the usage did not arise in India until about A.D. 400. For this conclusion he relies mainly on inscriptions. This view is combated by Indians; and Professor Keith believes these planetary names were known to the Buddhist writer, Āryadeva, who cannot be dated later than the third century. It seems clear that we can say that no mention in Hindu literature is likely to be earlier than the third century, but we cannot go further.

All of these Graha are believed to have a special influence on the days named from them, and on the lives of men born under them. Sunday, Saturday and Tuesday are considered very inauspicious days, Saturn being considered the son of the Sun. The remaining four days, under the influence of the Moon, Mercury (the son of the Moon), Jupiter and Venus, are auspicious.

A solar day is divided into eight watches, or Prahara, of about three hours' duration, and into Ghaṭikā, Pala, and Vipala, the relation of which to the Western hours, minutes and seconds is given below:

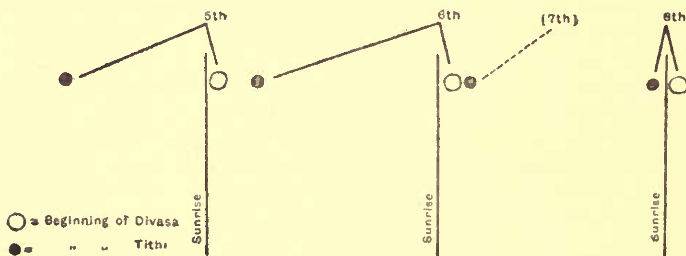
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 60 prativipala (not used) | = 1 vipala | = ·4″ |
| 60 vipala | = 1 pala | = 24″ |
| 60 pala[1] | = 1 ghaṭikā | = 24′ |
| 60 ghaṭikā | = 1 divasa | = 24 hours |
| | | = 1 day and night |

The exact point of time for performing certain ceremonies at weddings, etc., has to be calculated with

[1] From Pala = a straw, *i.e.* a very small thing.

minute care, or the auspicious moment may be missed. The modern Hindu almost universally uses the Western system of calculating by hours and minutes, for the ordinary purposes of life, and a watch or clock is found in most well-to-do houses. But for timing religious ceremonies the Hindu system is in general use, the equivalent for the clock, or hour-glass, being the metal bowl with a hole pierced in it, floating on water. As the water enters the bowl, the latter settles down lower and lower, until, at the exact close of a ghaṭikā, the bowl sinks. "Ghaṭikā" was originally the name of the bowl. Later it came to be applied to the period of time taken for the bowl to fill with water and sink.

*Intercalary and Deleted Tithi.* Just as the Hindu calendar intercalates or deletes the names of occasional




KSHAYA TITHI

lunar months, owing to the impossibility of making lunar and solar time correspond, so, and for the same reason, intercalary and deleted tithi are met with. It should be borne in mind, however, that it is merely a matter of nomenclature. The thirty tithi of each month in reality run their full and consecutive course.

The civil day is a solar one, reckoned from sunrise to sunrise, and for ordinary purposes of life it is practically impossible to use any but the natural solar day. But the tithi is a lunar division of time, and occupies from day to day various spaces in the solar day or divasa. It may begin at 4.0 p.m., and end during

the following afternoon. Temple priests or others wholly given up to following the observances of their religion can and do regulate their lives and actions by the tithi, but the ordinary man is obliged to regulate his by the solar day. A fairly satisfactory plan has been evolved by which the tithi and divasa may be made more or less to correspond. It is as follows:

The tithi beginning before, or at, sunrise, is coupled with that divasa, and the tithi beginning after sunrise (unless it ends before the next sunrise) is coupled with the following divasa. But if a tithi beginning after sunrise on one morning ends before sunrise on the following morning, it cannot be coupled with any divasa and is therefore deleted or Kshaya.

The diagram on page 26 will explain the foregoing. It illustrates the Kshaya 7th of Āshāḍha kṛishṇa-paksha samvat 1975 (July 19-20, 1919).

If, on the other hand, a tithi begins immediately before one sunrise and ends after the following sunrise, the name of the tithi is coupled with both divasa involved, so that two tithis of the same designation appear. The former of the two is known as Adhika or Vṛiddhi. The diagram on page 28 illustrates the Adhika 8th of Bhādrapada śuklapaksha samvat 1975 (Sept. 2-3, 1919).

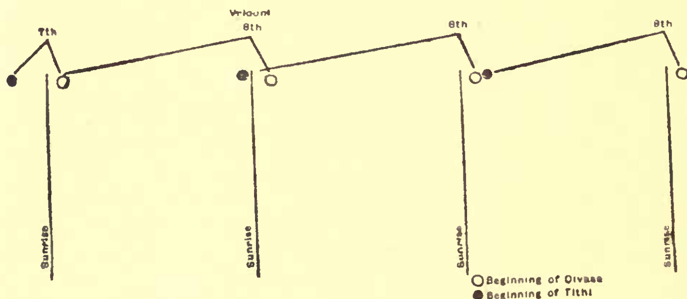
As the tithi is normally a trifle shorter than the divasa, kshaya occurs more frequently than vṛiddhi. Kshaya usually occurs about twelve times in a year, and vṛiddhi about seven times.

It will be seen at once that difficulties may arise as to the day of observance of certain rites prescribed for any particular tithi. If a tithi should extend from 1.0 p.m. on one divasa until 12.45 p.m. the next divasa, it becomes a nice point which of the two divasa should be given over to festivities. Many and minute rules have been drawn up to guide the priests in determining what pronouncement to make in such a case. Popular opinion has decided roughly that if a tithi begins at any time before noon, the current divasa is the festive day, if after noon, the following divasa. But it is not

uncommon to find part of the community keeping one divasa, and part the following divasa as a festival day, while the more well-to-do, who can afford it, will be keeping both.

It is customary for groups of men and women to gather on the day of the new year (Chaitra śuklapaksha pratipadā), to listen to the recitation of the new Pañchāṅga by an astrologer.

*Legendary Origin of Eclipses.*[1] When, in the beginning, gods and demons, having by churning the milky




VṚIDDHI TITHI

ocean produced immortality-giving Amṛita, the gods were drinking it, a demon in the guise of a god made his way among them and began to drink likewise. The sun and moon discovered him and told Vishṇu. The amṛita had not yet descended the demon's throat, so that he had not yet become wholly immortal, when Vishṇu severed his head from his trunk. The head became Rāhu and the tail Ketu, both of whom proceeded to the planetary heavens, and have ever since been pursuing the sun and moon to have their revenge.

An eclipse marks the temporary success of Rāhu and Ketu over their enemies ; they have caught and swallow-

[1] Ādi Parva, of Mahābhārata.

ed them. But they are forced to disgorge again and the eternal chase is renewed.

*The Cycle of Jupiter.* It was realised in the Vedic period that a full solar year could not be made to correspond with a twelve lunar-month year, nor a thirty solar day month with a thirty lunar-day month. The Paitāmaha Siddhānta gives five years as the yuga or cycle of the sun and moon, in which time the sun completes five years of 366 days, and the moon sixty-two months of thirty tithi, each tithi corresponding to $29\frac{16}{31}$ solar days ; that is sixty ordinary months and two adhika months, arranged as follows :

| *Months* | | *Adhika month* | | *Months* | | *Adhika month* | | *Months* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 30 days | + | 1 day | + | 30 days | + | 1 day | = | 62 days |
| $885\frac{15}{31}$ | + | $29\frac{16}{31}$ | + | $885\frac{15}{31}$ | + | $29\frac{16}{31}$ | = | 1830 days |
| $2\frac{1}{2}$ years | | | | $2\frac{1}{2}$ years | | | = | 5 years |

This five-year cycle, combined with the twelve-year cycle of Jupiter's progress through the zodiac, makes what is known as the sixty-year cycle of Jupiter.

# CHAPTER II

## ON AUSPICIOUS AND INAUSPICIOUS SEASONS

THE Auspicious seasons may be enumerated as under :

1. The *Uttarāyaṇa*, or northward progress of the sun, from the winter to the summer solstice, *i.e.* Pausha to Āshāḍha.
2. The *Light half* of each month, from new to full moon.
3. The month of *Vaiśākha*.
4. The *Saṁkrānti* days.
5. The *Days* under the rule of the Moon, Mercury, Jupiter, and Venus, *i.e.* Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.
6. "The three and a half lucky times,"[1] *i.e.* Dasarā (Āśvina śukla tenth), Dīpāvali (Kārttika śukla first), Varshapratipadā (Chaitra śukla first), and Nāgapañchamī (Śrāvaṇa śukla fifth).

The Inauspicious seasons, generally speaking, are as under :

1. The *Dakshiṇāyana*, or southward progress of the sun, from the summer to the winter solstice, *i.e.* Āshāḍha to Pausha.
2. The *Dark half* of each month, from the full to the new moon.
3. The *Intercalary* or Adhika month (See Chap. I, p. 26).
4. The *Days* under the rule of the Sun, Mars, and Saturn, *i.e.* Sunday, Tuesday and Saturday.
5. The *Rainy season*, *i.e.* the four months from Āshāḍha śukla tenth to Kārttika śukla tenth.

1. *The Uttarāyaṇa and Dakshiṇāyana.* It is the natural instinct of all men to welcome that half of the year when the sun's warmth and the length of the days

[1] Molesworth, साडेतीन मुहूर्त. The Nāgapañchamī is the "half" and has only a qualified auspiciousness.

are increasing; and to have a certain feeling of depression during the other half, when light and warmth are daily decreasing, and the sun appears to be withdrawing himself from the world. To this instinct is doubtless attributable the pronouncement that the Uttarāyaṇa and Dakshiṇāyana were respectively auspicious and inauspicious seasons. The lucky period[1] was known as a "god's day" and the unlucky as a "god's night." Again,[2] the sun when moving northwards was said to "guard the gods," and when southwards to "guard the fathers." The path to the south was taken by the spirits of the dead.

Of course, the difference between the sun's position at the winter and summer solstices would be much more marked in the Āryans' former home of a higher latitude than India than in Central and Southern India.

In the Bhīshma and Anuśāsana Parvas of the Mahābhārata is given the well-remembered story of the mortal wounding of the sage Bhīshma, during the Dakshiṇāyana, and his determination to live until the sun turned northwards. He lived, although transfixed with arrows, for fifty-eight nights, and died just after the Uttarāyaṇa had set in.

2. *The Light and Dark Halves of the Month.* As in the case of the sun, the period of the moon's waxing appeals to man's natural instinct as being a happier season than that of its waning. After the hot Indian day a man likes to sit out in the cool air and talk with his friends. Once the full moon day is past, the moon rises later and later at night, and very soon, as far as the ordinary man is concerned, it is a "moonless night," for the moon does not rise until after he has gone to sleep.

Manu's Code[3] pronounces the dark half to be a day of the Manes (the dead), for work, and the light half to be their night for sleep.

[1] Institutes of Vishṇu, *S.B.E.*, VII, p. 77.
[2] Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, *S.B.E.*, XII, p. 289.
[3] *S.B.E.*, XXV, p. 67.

Thus the spirits are most active, and likely to influence men during the dark half, the unlucky time. Possibly it was for this reason that the season set apart for performing the memorial service for the departed is in the dark half of the month Bhādrapada, and at every new moon, the darkest day of the month.

The *Kaushītaki Upanishad*[1] says that the spirits of all who die go first to the moon, and that whereas those who die in the light half "delight the moon with their spirits," those who die in the dark half are sent on to be born again, and the Vishṇu Purāṇa[2] says that the moon "nourishes the gods in the light fortnight; the pitṛi in the dark fortnight." To this day men are apprehensive of dying in the dark half, and feel happier as to the state of their deceased relations if they died in the light half.

Very few festivals or religious fairs are held in the dark half of the month, the exceptions being almost entirely those in honour of Śiva, the Terrible, or of one of his manifestations.

3. The whole of the month *Vaiśākha* is considered auspicious, and is specially devoted to Kṛishṇa worship. The Tulasī and Pippal trees should be watered daily, three baths should be taken, stories of Kṛishṇa should be read and presents given to Brāhmans.

4. The *Saṁkrānti* days (see Chap. III) are very auspicious for giving alms and for bathing, especially those at the solstices and equinoxes.

5. The *Intercalary* month is also known as the "unclean month" (see Chap. I, p. 20). This idea[3] of the unlucky nature of these months dates back to Vedic times, when the ordinary months were called "deva" (gods), and the intercalary when it occurred "asura" (demon). Marriages and thread ceremonies are not held in such a month.

[1] *S.B.E.*, I, p. 274.
[2] H. H. Wilson's trans., II, p. 303.
[3] R. Shamashastry, in *I.A.*, XLI, pp. 30, 45, 294.

6. *Days of the Week.* From very old times the Sun, Saturn (his son), and Mars have been believed to exert a malefic influence, while the Moon, Mercury, Jupiter and Venus exert a beneficent one over the days of which they are the lords. Varāhamihira[1] in his *Bṛihajjātakam* pronounced Mercury, in himself, a neutral, but malefic or benefic in his influence as he is in conjunction with the other planets. The common folk of India to-day prefer not to undertake any new enterprise on a Sunday, Tuesday or Saturday (see the Marāṭhī proverb, न कर्याचा वार शनिवार, "The day not to do a thing is Saturday").[2]

Monday is perhaps the most lucky day of all; while Saturday is the most unlucky. The legend of the infant Gaṇeśa losing his head from the glance of Saturn falling upon him is well-known, while Dr. Crooke[3] records that an epidemic of smallpox, which broke out at Jessore in A.D. 1817, was accounted for by its occurring in a month containing five Saturdays.

One puzzling circumstance is that Tuesday, one of the unlucky days, bears the name Maṅgala (fortunate). It has been suggested that this nomenclature may be due to the old-established fear of calling an unlucky thing by an unlucky name, the mere utterance of which may bring misfortune. Hence the covert reference to an ill-omened thing by the name "the fortunate one," well understood by the hearer.

The red colour of Mars, and his consequent traditional connection with the idea of war and bloodshed are sufficient to have established him as a planet of ill-omen. Nor is it difficult to understand why the slow-moving (*i.e.* "lazy") Saturn should be considered of ill-omen. But why the Sun, who is also worshipped as the vivifier and giver of good things, should share in this their unpopular characteristic is difficult to understand. Jupiter and Venus, by their brilliance and beauty,

[1] H. P. Chatterjee's trans., *S.B.H.*, p. 40.
[2] *Marāṭhī Proverbs*, Manwaring, p. 145.
[3] Crooke, I, p. 130.

would establish themselves as beneficent, and the Moon[1] is believed to hold the seed of all life, from whom it is gathered by the gods and presented to mankind.

Most of the planets seem to be considered malefic towards women. According to tradition[2] in some parts of India, it is unlucky for a girl to come of age on a Sunday, Monday, Tuesday or Saturday, or she will either become a widow, lose her children, commit suicide, or become a bad character, according to the day. Wednesday and Friday are only partially lucky for her, as she will bear only daughters if she comes of age on either of these days. Her only really lucky day is Thursday. If she comes of age on that day she will become the mother of sons.

7. *The Rainy Season.* This is reckoned from Āshāḍha śukla tenth to Kārttika śukla tenth, and is known as the Chaturmāsa (four months). It is less a period of actual inauspiciousness than a season when it behoves men to walk very carefully and to be punctilious over their religious observances ; for Vishṇu is understood to have retired to the bottom of the ocean for a four-months' sleep, leaving the world without his close protection. (The *Kārttika Mahātmya* says that the giant, Śaṅkāśura, carried away the Vedas to the bottom of the sea, and it took Vishṇu four months to recover them). No marriages or thread ceremonies are performed during this period ; brides of less than a year's standing return to their parents' house, and many people leave the regions south of the Godāvarī river (the boundary of Rāvaṇa's kingdom), to live in Rāma's kingdom north of that river.

The probable explanation of the matter is that this is the season of heavy rain, unsuitable for travelling, or for holding the processions which accompany marriages and other ceremonies. The law[3] forbidding

[1] Kaushītaki Upanishad, *S.B.E.*, I, p. 274.
[2] *Bom. Gaz.*, XVIII, p. 240.
[3] Sacred Laws of the Āryas, *S.B.E.*, II, p. 191.

an ascetic to change his residence during this season probably had a connection with the inconvenience of doing so. Again, the tradition[1] in North India that it is unlucky to mend the roof thatch in the rainy season is easy to understand. It is also considered unlucky[2] to eat certain things, as, for instance, lemons, many-seeded fruit, certain kinds of lentils and roots, also to drink any milk from a copper pot, or spilt water; which things have probably been found to be inimical to health during the wet season.

8. *Other Occasions.* Besides the auspicious and inauspicious seasons enumerated above, a number of occasional days are noticed as being good or evil. For instance:

(i) The period between 11.0 p.m. and 3.0 a.m. is inauspicious for holy works; and is known as "the time of sin."

(ii) If the planet Jupiter[3] is visible together with the full moon, it is an occasion of good omen. Merit acquired by almsgiving, or fasting, on that night is imperishable.

(iii) Siṁhastha, or the year when Jupiter is in the sign Siṁha (Leo), is inauspicious for marriages and thread ceremonies, which must not be performed unless at a shrine of Śambhu, but auspicious for bathing in the Godāvarī.

(iv) Kanyāgata, or the year when Jupiter is in the sign Kanyā (Virgo), is very auspicious for marriages, thread ceremonies and bathing in the Kṛishṇa river.

(v) The day of Jupiter's entry into the sign Kumbha (Aquarius) is auspicious for bathing in the Gaṅgā and Jamnā rivers.

(vi) Ardhodaya,[4] or the occurrence of the five following events at one time, which only happens once in twenty to twenty-five years, is a time of great auspiciousness. All water is sacred, and all Brāhmans

[1] Crooke, II, p. 300. [2] Sharmā, p. 104.
[3] Institutes of Vishṇu, *S.B.E.*, VII, p. 157.
[4] *F. & H.*, p. 6.

as holy as Brahmā. Therefore there is great merit in bathing and almsgiving. The five are:

(*a*) Sunrise coinciding with a new moon, (*b*) the sun being in Makara, (*c*) the moon being in nakshatra Sravaṇā, (*d*) on a Sunday, (*e*) in the month Pausha.

Professor Kielhorn[1] quotes an inscription referring to the very auspicious character of Ardhodaya:

श्री शाके करबाणविश्वगणिते साधारणे वत्सरे पौषेऽर्धोदयनाम्नी पुण्यसमये.

"At the auspicious time of the Ardhodaya in (the month) Pausha of the year Sādhāraṇa, which was the Śaka year 1352."

(vii) *Kapila Shashṭhī*, or the simultaneous occurrence of the six following events, is very auspicious for almsgiving. It only occurs about once in every sixty years, and is so rare that it has come to be used in a proverbial sense as an improbable event (cp. "a blue moon").

The six events are:

(*a*) The month Bhādrapada, (*b*) the dark half sixth, (*c*) on Tuesday, (*d*) joined with nakshatra Rohiṇī, (moon), (*e*) the sun in nakshatra Hasta, (*f*) at the yoga Vyatīpāta, and all these must occur during the daytime. It last occurred on October 12, 1912.

There is a legend[2] to the effect that the sage Nārada, longing for married happiness, was transformed into a woman, and bore sixty sons, one in every consecutive year. At the end of that time, having implored Vishṇu for retransformation, he again became a man, and the sixty sons were appointed regents of the years of the sixty years' cycle, at the beginning of which Kapila Shashṭhī occurs. This sixty years' cycle synchronises with the cycle of Jupiter (see Chap. I, p. 29).

(viii) *Somavati*, or the new moon falling on a Monday, is auspicious for almsgiving.

(ix) *Grahaṇa*, or eclipse, whether of sun or moon, is very auspicious, while if a solar eclipse occurs on a Sunday, or a lunar eclipse on a Monday, the occasion is

[1] *I.A.*, XXV, p. 345. [2] Gupte, p. 97.

called Chūḍāmaṇi (crest-jewel), *i.e.* prominent, and the merit obtained is imperishable.

(x) *Akshayya Third* (Vaiśākha śukla third), if it falls on a Wednesday and the moon is in Rohiṇī, is especially auspicious.

11. Certain tithi also are considered auspicious for alms-giving, alms given on these days being productive of very great merit, *i.e.* the fourth śukla or kṛishṇa, when falling on a Tuesday. The seventh śukla, if it falls on a Sunday or coincides with a saṁkrānti. The eighth, if it falls on a Wednesday. The eleventh, if it is joined with the nakshatra Punarvasu. The twelfth is auspicious under many conditions, *e.g.* if it follows two successive elevenths, if it precedes two successive fifteenths, if it is joined with certain nakshatra, etc.

Professor Kielhorn[1] quotes an inscription showing the cumulative force of many inauspicious periods coinciding in a single point of time:

क्षयाह्वयकुवत्सरे द्वितययुक्त वैशाखके महीतनयवारके युतबळक्षपक्षेतरे ।
प्रतापेनिधिदेवराट् प्रलयमाप हन्तासमश्चतुर्दशदिने कथं पितृपते निवार्या गतिः ॥

"In the evil year Kshaya, in the wretched second Vaiśākha, on a miserable Tuesday, in the fortnight which was the reverse of bright, on the fourteenth day, the unequalled store of valour, Devarāj, alas! met with death. How, O Yama, can fate be averted?"

[1] *I.A.*, XXV, p. 346.

## CHAPTER III

### ON SOLAR AND SEASONAL FESTIVALS

SUN worship was general in the Vedic period, and to-day it is found in India in the daily morning repetition of the Gāyatrī by the Brāhman, and of the phrase "Sūrya Nārāyaṇa" by the peasant; in the universal celebration of the Makara Saṁkrānti or winter solstice, and in certain other observances.

The sun appears in Vedic times as Sūrya, Āditya, etc. He rides in a chariot drawn by seven horses, or by one seven-headed horse, and he changes his chariot for a new one at the beginning of each year. The Purāṇic legend[1] of Vishṇu, in his dwarf incarnation, covering the earth, sky and heavens in three steps, is generally believed to be a reference to the course of the sun through the divisions of the universe.

At the present day shrines[2] and images of the sun are rare, but temples exist in some places, the two most important being those at Kanārak, near Puri, and at Gayā.

In Śaṅkarāchārya's time[3] (eighth to ninth century A.D.) there were six recognised sects of sun worshippers, worshipping the rising sun as Brahmā, the noon sun as Śiva, the setting sun as Vishṇu, etc., but no such division is known at the present day; the pious Brāhman[4] meditates on all three gods as he repeats his Gāyatrī at sunrise.

[1] Vedic Mythology, A. A. Macdonell, *E.I.A.R.*, pp. 37-39.
[2] Crooke, I, pp. 5, 6.
[3] Crooke, I, p. 6.
[4] *Daily Practice of the Hindus*, Srisa Chandra Vasu.

I. The *Solar* Feasts and Observances in the present day are:

1. The *Saṁkrānti* days, more especially the Makara Saṁkrānti of the North and West of India, corresponding with the Pongal of the South.

At the entry of the sun into each zodiacal sign he is worshipped by some, by others only at his entry into the four signs, Makara (Capricornus), Mesha (Aries), Karka (Cancer), and Tulā (Libra), marking respectively the winter solstice, vernal equinox, summer solstice, and autumnal equinox; and of these four the first is by far the most widely observed.

(i) The *Makara Śaṁkrānti*.[1] This occurs about the twelfth or thirteenth of January, and falls some time in the month Pausha. The holiday lasts for three days, and is a time of family reunions, feasting, bathing, and general rejoicing. Almsgiving is also practised, and a present is given to the family priest. It is most auspicious.

In Bengal it synchronises with the rice harvest, and special rice cakes are eaten, children wear necklaces of sugar birds, with which on the following day crows and other birds are fed. On the first day a shred of straw is tied to furniture and cooking pots to ensure prosperity.

A large fair is held at Allāhābād, many pilgrims going to bathe there at the junction of the Gaṅgā and Jamnā rivers, many others going to the mouth of the Gaṅgā, where offerings are also made to the ocean.

In Mahārāshṭra, besides almsgiving and bathing, the following practices are observed:

(*a*) Sugared sesamum seed is given to all members of the family, and to friends, with the words: तिळगुळ घ्या गोड़ बोला ("Eat sweet sesamum and speak to me sweetly"), to ensure the absence of quarrelling throughout the year. Sesamum oil is burned in the lamps, offered to Śaṅkara, and rubbed on the body before bathing.

[1] *F. & H.*, p. 55.

This use of sesamum may be due to the belief that it is able to ward off evil spirits. The following dictum on the use of sesamum occurs in the Mahābhārata: "The gift of sesame seeds[1] is a very superior gift. It produces everlasting merit. . . . The gift of sesame at Śrāddha is applauded. . . . One should, on the day of full moon of Vaiśākha, make gifts of sesame unto the Brāhmans. They should also be made to eat and to touch sesame on every occasion that one can afford."

(*b*) Women desiring children secretly drop a cocoanut into some vessel in a Brāhman house. This is known as अवचितफळ (secret fruit).

(*c*) Like the foregoing and following, another custom to secure children is to smear five pitchers with lime and red lead, and give them to five women of one's married friends, especially to brides.

(*d*) A woman throws two cocoanuts into a neighbour's house and begs for two in exchange, saying, खेळते घ्या रांगते द्या ("Take a toy and give a child").

(*e*) Gifts of two lamps and two mirrors are made by women to Brāhmans, and betel nut and spices to their wives.

(*f*) No handling of cowdung is permitted on the chief feast day, *i.e.* the middle one of the three, so, as this is the staple fuel of the country, all cooking must be done the previous day.

In Southern India this day is called *Pongal* (from a Tāmil word, meaning "Is it boiling?"), the first day of the Tāmil year. New pots are bought in which rice in fresh milk is boiled, and according as the milk takes a shorter or longer time to boil, the year will be prosperous or the reverse. Hence it is eagerly watched by the family.

The South India cattle feast, called Poḷā in the West (see Chap. VI, p. 118), is held at Pongal, on the third day. Cows and oxen are sprinkled with saffron water and worshipped by the men.

[1] Anuśāsana Parva, Pratāp Chandra Roy's trans., p. 348.

With this festival may be coupled that known as:

(ii) *Mākarī Saptamī, Bhāskarī Saptamī or Ratha Saptamī*, which, according to some calendars, occurs on the seventh day after the entry of the sun into Makara (Capricornus), and according to others on a fixed day, namely, the seventh of the light half of Māgha.

The chief rite for this day is to bathe (if possible in the Gaṅgā) at sunrise, placing on the head a platter of seven arka leaves, with a small lamp upon it, while prayers are being said mentally to the sun. The platter and lamp are afterwards set afloat on the water, and gifts of food, clothing or money made to a Brāhman, while a picture of the sun in his seven horse chariot is made and worshipped with red sandal paste, red flowers, etc. This rite is to secure freedom from sickness or sorrow for the year.

Originally[1] the seventh of each month (both halves) was kept for sun worship. Now the seventh dark half has gone out of use. Sun offerings should be of eight kinds, *viz.* water, milk, curds, ghī, sesamum, mustard seed, rice and kuśa grass.

The legend runs that a former Kshatriya king had a son who was weakly, and on consulting the sages he learned the cause to be that in a former birth his son had despised Brāhmans, and not bestowed charity on them, nor worshipped the gods, especially the sun. If this were done in his present life, it would be accepted as expiation, and he would grow strong. Hence the custom arose.

It is kept by both men and women.

(iii) *Mahāvishuva Saṁkrānti.* (Vishuva = First point of Aries or Libra.) There are the vernal and autumnal equinoxes, when the sun enters the signs Mesha (Aries) and Tulā (Libra), in the months Chaitra and Āśvina. The Mesha saṁkrānti is largely observed in North India by bathing in the Gaṅgā. Elsewhere it and the Tulā saṁkrānti are not very generally observed.

[1] "Religious Festivals of Hindus," H. H. Wilson, *Miscell. Essays*, p. 26.

2. *New Year's Day, Dhvajāropaṇa or Guḍhī Pāḍavā.* This falls on the first day of the light half of Chaitra. As explained in Chapter I, the actual new year, beginning on the Mesha saṁkrānti, is not kept as the beginning of the civil year, as it does not necessarily coincide with a new moon day. The civil year begins from the new moon immediately preceding the Mesha saṁkrānti, and is a day of holiday making and rejoicing. It is marked by two customs in addition to the usual bathing and visiting friends, *viz.*

(i) The erecting of a pole (Dhvajā or Guḍhī). This is crowned by a new garment, usually a woman's bodice or robe, and a brass drinking pot, and may be thrust out from a window, or tied to a neighbouring tree or to the roof.

(ii) The eating of leaves of the nīm tree.

With regard to the first custom there is a legend that Indra gave a standard to one of his devotees, variously called King Vasu or Uparichara, wherewith to worship him, but the explanation seems to require as much elucidation as the custom.

Washburn Hopkins[1] places this festival at the end of the rains and beginning of that new year reckoned from the new moon of "Saumya māsa," and others say it celebrates the birth of the first of Nārada's sixty sons (see Chapter II, p. 36). Another explanation of the pole is that this day celebrates the return of Rāma and Sītā to Ayodhya after the defeat of Rāvaṇa, and his joyful reception by his subjects. This, again, is no real explanation. The popular idea is that it is done "to bring luck," and the origin has evidently been forgotten.

With regard to the second custom, it is popularly believed to be very beneficial to the health to eat nīm leaves. The tree is sacred to the disease goddesses, especially to Śītalā (the smallpox goddess), so that eating a few leaves on the auspicious first of the year would be considered a precaution against illness during the year.

[1] Epic Mythology, *E.I.A.R.*, p. 125.

3. *Itu Pūjā.*[1] From Kārttika full moon to Mārgaśīrsha full moon. (Bihār, all Kārttika.)

The word Itu has been derived from Mitra—the Sun. This pūjā is performed every Sunday for a month by women in Bengal. Libations of water are offered in small pots to the sun, and afterwards they are immersed in a river or tank.

An old legend tells the usual tale of a family in want and trouble restored to prosperity and happiness through the performance of this sun worship by a daughter.

4. Every Sunday in Śrāvaṇa the sun is worshipped.

5. The entry of the sun into the nakshatra Hasta (or Gaja).

This occurs about the month Āśvina, at the close of the rainy season. It can only be observed properly by the rich, as the correct ceremony includes the gift (to a Brāhman) of a golden elephant, on which are seated golden figures of Śiva, Gaurī his wife, and Gaṇeśa their son; also a golden image of Gaurī on an elephant should be worshipped. The ceremony is called Gajagaurī vrata.

6. *Svastika Vrata.* On every evening during the four months of the rainy season some women draw a Svastika (an ancient symbol of good luck), and worship it; and at the close of the season they present a Brāhman with a gold or silver plate, on which the same symbol appears.

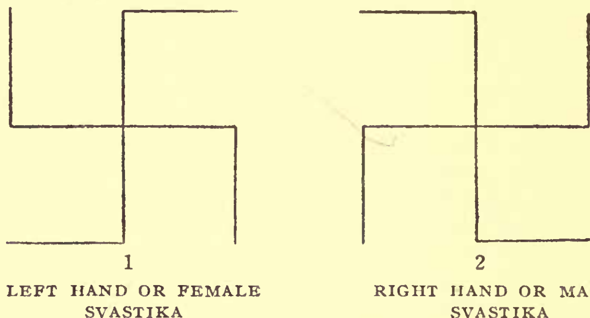
Whether the svastika was, or was not, a sun-symbol has not been decided by scholars, but it certainly is connected with the sun in the minds of Mahārāshṭra women, and the above vrata is a form of sun worship. See Enthoven, *I.A.*, XL, Supplement, p. 15.

II. We now come to the *Seasonal* Festivals, regulated by the sun, but in which objects other than the sun are worshipped.

[1] *F. & H.*, p. 39.

1. The *Holī*, *Holikā*, or *Hutāśanī*; on the full moon of Phālguna.

This is a very popular festival, and has its roots in the worship of the sun, now well on its northward course, and bringing the welcome burning heat. Any attempt to get to the real origin brings one up against a variety of legends, which by their very number and variation prove that they themselves are but the results of endeavours on the part of different people to




LEFT HAND OR FEMALE SVASTIKA

RIGHT HAND OR MALE SVASTIKA

*Note.*—The Right hand Svastika is that almost always used. [Svasti+ka=" may it be well "+agent for bringing to pass.]

explain an already existing custom. The following are some of these legends:

(*a*) There was a demoness, Ḍhunḍhā or Holikā, who used to eat the children of a certain village; and was eventually scared away permanently by the blowing of horns and the use of obscene language.[1] (*Note* in this explanation there is no trace of sun worship.)

(*b*) Tripurāsura's son Tārakāsura, growing powerful, so tormented the gods that they decided to send Kāmadeva, the god of love, to Śiva, to induce him to destroy their persecutor. Śiva, at his devotions, was so angry at the interruption that his glare of wrath burnt Kāmadeva to ashes, whereupon the watching hosts of

[1] Sharmā, p. 266; *F. & H.*, p. 38.

spirits burst into mocking and evil words.[1] (Here we get the reference to fierce heat, as in the three following legends.)

(*c*) Hiraṇyakaśipu, a demon, the father of Holikā and Pralhāda, incensed by his son's devotion to Vishṇu, commanded his daughter Holikā to take her brother on her lap and burn him to death, but by Vishṇu's interposition Holikā was burnt and Pralhāda escaped unhurt.[2]

(*d*) Holikā, the sister of Saṁvat, burnt herself on her brother's pyre.

(*e*) Holikā was a goddess who could only be appeased by fire.

From the confusion of these and other legends two things emerge: firstly, that some one was burnt; and, secondly, that obscene language was used and a loud noise was made, and on these points may be noticed Dr. Crooke's conclusion[3] that the festival is probably very ancient, having been taken over by the Āryans from the aborigines, that it may signify the burning of the old year to usher in the new, and that the use of indecent words may be to repel the evil spirits who might check fertility in man, animals or crops. It seems to be established that evil spirits[4] were believed, in primitive times, to be warded off by indecent acts or words, or by horn-blowing, drum-beating, or other loud noise.

Five different practices are combined in the Konkan, between the Western Ghats and the sea, where the people are more devoted Holī-keepers than any others in India.

(*a*) The burning of a bonfire on the full moon night after an all-day fast. From the first or second day of the month boys begin collecting, begging or stealing wood, cowdung cakes, and any other fuel, and on the

[1] Sharmā, p. 266.
[2] "Folklore of Gujerat," R. E. Enthoven, *I.A.*, XLVI.
[3] Crooke, II, 321.
[4] "Spirit Basis of Belief and Custom," *I.A.*, XXIV, p. 263.
" " " " " " XXV, p. 36.
*Golden Bough*, II, pp. 162-63.

fifteenth day the bonfire is built round a branch of plantain or castor oil tree, towns will have a bonfire in almost every street, villages at least two or three, built by the different castes. The fire is kept up all night, and in some places is not allowed to die out until the fifteenth day of the dark half. Men and boys dance round it, smearing themselves with the ashes, and singing.

(*b*) Singing of songs, celebrating Kṛishṇa's love episodes with the herdswomen, beating of drums, and blowing of horns, shouting of obscene words to passers by, especially to women, and uttering a loud cry while beating the mouth with the hand. This is called "Bombne," and is peculiar to this festival. This particular side of the festival is confined chiefly to the lower castes, it is obnoxious to the educated and more refined, who are endeavouring—with considerable success—to suppress it. It is now possible for respectable women to go about without being insulted and molested, as it was not even ten years ago.

(*c*) Throwing coloured liquid and powder over one another and passers by. This should really be confined to the Raṅga pañchamī day on kṛishṇa fifth, but, like the shouting and singing, it is carried on from before the full moon till about the sixth or seventh of the dark half. Small tin syringes and bamboo blow-pipes are used, and although indiscriminate colour throwing is being strongly suppressed, yet the custom is kept up by families in their own houses and courtyards.

(*d*) Dancing, by men and boys of the lower castes, a dance peculiar to this feast, resembling some of the old English folk-dances. A band of about two dozen will go round a town, on the days before the full moon, to collect money with which to keep the feast.

(*e*) The practice of touching low-caste people by Brāhmans and others of high caste. This is done on the day after the full moon, the day called शिव शिव शिंगा ("Touch, touch, Śiṁgā[1] or Phālguna"), and is believed

[1] An alternative name for the month.

to lead to immunity from disease. A purificatory bath must be taken after the defilement.

Sharmā[1] quotes an ancient authority as follows:

होळीच्या दुसरे दिवशीं अंत्यजाला स्पर्श करून स्नान केलें असतां आधिव्याधि नाहींशा होतात.

("By the touching of the low-caste on the second day of Hoḷī, followed by bathing, all kinds of illness are destroyed.")

Mention should also be made of the necklaces of yellow and white sugar medallions given to children at the feast.

In Madras the bonfire is omitted, and both there and in Bengal the swinging of Kṛishṇa's image, in a small swing, is substituted, to celebrate the return of spring and the vivifying power of the sun, and the season of love.

Another spring festival is that of

2. *Madana trayodaśī*, *Kāma trayodaśī*, or *Anaṅga trayodaśī*, on Chaitra śukla thirteenth.

Madana and his wife, Rati, are the god and goddess of love. Madana is the friend of Vasanta, the Spring, *i.e.* love is associated with the spring season. His banner bears the sign of Makara, the sea monster, which is considered to be the emblem of love, and he plays on the vīṇā or lute. The pair are worshipped with flowers and dancing. This is a North India festival, not kept in Mahārāshṭra, where its place is taken by the revels of the Hoḷī in the previous month. The reason for this may be that the hot weather begins nearly a month earlier in the West and South than in the North.

*Note.*[2] The Vaiśvadeva sacrifice, for producing and sustaining life, was performed in old times on the Phālguna full moon. A distinct connection can be traced between this sacrifice (and its object) and the modern spring festivals.

Another Seasonal festival is kept on the Malabar and Konkan coast:

[1] P. 251. [2] Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, *S.B.E.*, XII, p. 383.

3. *Nāraḷī pūrṇīmā*, or Cocoanut Full Moon, at Śrāvaṇa full moon. From this date the south-west monsoon is supposed to abate, and coasting trade can be resumed. The Portuguese Government remits all customs on boats entering Goa harbour on this day. It is essentially a traders' festival, and has become established through popular custom, not through any classic authority. At evening the worshippers assemble on the shore and worship the sea with mantras, throwing in offerings of cocoanuts, Sharmā[1] says, as an offering to the "Food-giving goddess of the water"; others[2] say to Varuṇa.

4. *Gaṇeśa chaturthī*. This holiday, on Bhādrapada śukla fourth, has been included among the seasonal festivals, as there seems to be a distinct connection between Gaṇeśa and the harvest of the early crops, pointed out by recent writers. Sharmā[3] says that the fate of the later crops being uncertain, depending as they do on whether the latter rain is good or not, it is exceedingly important to worship the Remover of Difficulties at this time of year.

The older ideas about him are various. He[4] had no place in Vedic literature, nor in the Rāmāyaṇa or the older Purāṇas, and he only later became identified with the Gaṇas, or attendants on Śiva.

Bhandārkar[5] says the Gaṇeśa cult was established between the fifth and eighth centuries A.D., and offers no solution of the genesis of his elephant head. Crooke[6] believes he was imported into Hinduism from a primitive indigenous cult, possibly he was an ancient Dravidian sun-god.

Popular legends make him the son of Śiva and Gaurī, born to destroy an elephant-headed demon and free the human race from his tyranny. Some say he was born with an elephant's head, others, more generally, that he was born a normal child, but lost his

[1] P. 132. [2] "Hinduism," *E.R.E.*, p. 686 ff. [3] P. 185.
[4] *Religious Thought and Life in India*, Monier Williams, p. 216.
[5] Bhandārkar, *E.I.A.R.*, p. 147; *E.R.E.*, II, p. 807.
[6] Crooke, I, p. 111.

head through the glance of ill-omened Saturn falling upon him, the first animal who could be found to supply the deficiency being an elephant.

His elephant head and his vehicle, the rat, are usually taken to be emblems of his prudence, sagacity and forethought. He is by nature malignant, but may be rendered benignant by propitiatory rites. His name is placed at the head of any writing, and he should be worshipped before beginning any new undertaking.

If a merchant becomes bankrupt,[1] he announces it by turning his Gaṇeśa image upside down, either as a sign that the god has deserted him, or in anger for his having done so.

He is worshipped by men, women and children, of all castes and sects, and has been adopted as the patron god of schoolboys and students, and also of a new cult of Nationalism.

Two distinct elements can be seen in his worship as practised in the present day:

(i) The whole family rises at dawn, anoints with oil and bathes, and then puts on holiday clothes, jewellery, etc. At noon an image of the god, either of gold, silver or clay, is brought and placed in a booth, or on a platform, decorated with lamps and mirrors. (A new plaster image is often bought annually, and consecrated, and is thrown into water at the close of the festival.) It is worshipped with offerings of dūrvā grass, flowers and many mantras. At the close the officiating Brāhman priest is given his fee, and he and the whole family and neighbours sit down to a feast. In the evening lighted lamps are waved round the god's image, and hymns are sung before it. The holiday is prolonged for five, seven, ten, or even twenty-one days, according to the desire and the means of the family. Pūjā is done three times daily, and on the last day cocoanuts are broken before the image, and prayers for his blessing on the family are offered.

[1] *Myths of Hindus and Buddhists*, Sister Nivedita and Ananda Coomaraswamy, p. 19.

The image (if of clay or plaster) is then thrown into water, or (if of metal) restored to its place in the house. It is customary to keep an image of Gaṇeśa in a niche in the living room. This festival is unique in one respect—the first day, rather than the last, is the greatest day.

(ii) Within recent years a new element has crept into Gaṇeśa worship in the towns of Mahārāshṭra. The growing interest of students in politics, and the adoption of Gaṇeśa as their patron god, have united to connect him closely with the national movement. This is strengthened by the fact that his worship is performed by all castes and sects. His name is derived from Gaṇa = a crowd, hence "populace," and he is called "Lord of the people." The legend of his slaying the elephant-headed demon, Gajāsura, is interpreted to the worshippers, who are coming to his temples in increasing numbers, as being the deliverance of the people from their national oppressor.

Bands of students and schoolboys form processions through the streets, and the whole of the festival is given a strong political significance similar to that of the Śivājī-venerating element in the Dasarā(q.v. p. 57).

The connection of Gaṇeśa with the moon is given in Chap. IV.

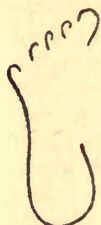
5. *Gaurī festival*,[1] on the seventh, eighth and ninth of Bhādrapada śukla. This goddess, the wife of Śiva and mother of Gaṇeśa, is considered the goddess of harvest and protectress of women. Her festival, chiefly observed by women, closely follows that of her son, when the early crops are ripe and the later require rain. Although she is popularly sometimes confused with Durgā or Kālī, yet she is quite distinct, being the survival, from pre-Āryan times, of another deity.

Her festival, celebrated especially in Mahārāshṭra, consists of three parts:

(i) On the first day a bundle of aghāda (wild balsam) is brought into the house, and in the evening

[1] Sharmā, p. 196 ff.; *Bom. Gaz.*, XVIII, p. 248; Gupte, p. 78 ff.

is wrapped in a silk cloth, placed in the lap of an unmarried girl and worshipped with mantras. Lucky marks, such as the svastika and Gaurī's footprint (origin of the "cone" pattern worked on Indian shawls, and from them introduced to England), are drawn in powder on the floor. The girl who carries the bundle representing Gaurī is regarded as her agent for movement and speech, and is led by the women of the house from room to room, in each being seated on a stool, and having lamps waved round her.


(i)


(ii)


(iii)

MODERN SYMBOL FOR LAKSHMĪ'S FOOTPRINT, SHOWING EVOLUTION FROM PROBABLE ORIGINAL FORM.
*Note.*—The left footprint is the more generally used.

In each room she is asked: "What have you brought"; and she answers, according to the nature of each room: "Treasure to fill a city," "Delicious food," "Beautiful children," and so on. The women reply: "Come on golden feet, and stay forever." This is believed to bring good fortune to each room. The bundle is then placed on a stool, offered sweets, milk, etc., and the night is spent by young girls in singing before her.

Her husband, Śiva, is supposed to have followed her secretly, and is represented by a pot of rice and a cocoanut hidden under a fold of her cloth.

On the second day she is offered food, and worshipped, and at noon a big feast is held. At night

again there is singing before her, and sometimes dancing in her praise.

On the third day she is put into a sūrpa, or winnowing tray, and carried by a woman servant to a stream or tank. The woman is told not under any conditions to look behind her as she goes. At the stream the plants are taken from the cloth and thrown into the water, the sūrpa and cloth are brought home, and the festival is over.

(ii) An important piece of ritual is this: the woman-servant must bring home from the bank of the stream a handful of gravel, which is thrown over the house to bring luck, and over the trees to protect them from vermin, after being worshipped.

(iii) On the middle day of the festival women take lengths of cotton, sixteen times their own height, fold them into skeins, and lay them before the goddess for her to bless. Some castes put the skeins, with pieces of cocoanut and new grain, into new earthenware pots, and stack them up with an image of Gaurī in a tray on the top. On the third day the skeins are taken up, folded into shorter lengths, tied with seven or sixteen knots (versions vary), worshipped, and fastened by each woman round her own neck, to be worn until Āśvina kṛishṇa eighth, or until a propitious day occurs.

The necklets are then removed, worshipped with offerings of sesamum seeds and rice, and either thrown into water or buried in some field or other cultivated ground.

Sometimes lucky necklets are made out of dūrvā grass, instead of cotton, and the day is known as *Dūrvāshṭamī*.

The customs connected with this festival are very old, and the legend which is told, purporting to be its origin, is less old than the customs, and is to the effect that a poor Brāhman, unable through poverty to keep it, by entertaining an unexpected guest, in the form of an old woman, was blessed by her with miraculous gifts of cows and food, and on her departure was told to

keep this festival each year to retain her favour. She was then discerned to be Gaurī herself.

Gupte suggests that the custom of bringing gravel from the river refers to the alluvial riverside soil as the original seat of the crops; that the old woman of the legend and the young girl of modern custom indicate the departure of the old and the coming of the new season; the lay figure of aghāda indicates the dead body of the old season; and the sixteen knots, and other use of the same number in connection with the cotton skeins, points to the sixteen weeks of the growth to harvest of the rice crops.

6. The *Navarātra*, *Durgā Pūjā* or *Dasarā* festival. This festival lasts for the first ten days of the light half of Āśvina, occurring too at the time of the autumn equinox, and is really compounded of four separate feasts; *i.e.* (i) the Sarasvatī feast from the seventh to ninth; (ii) the Lalitā feast on the fifth; (iii) the Durgā feast from the first to tenth; and (iv) the Victory feast on the tenth.

These four will be examined separately, although the distinctions between them are becoming confused in the popular mind; and the whole period is kept as though it were due to but one cause.

(i) *The Sarasvatī pūjā.*[1] (The same as the Bengal Śrī pañchamī, Māgha fifth.) Sarasvatī appears in the Ṛigveda as a river goddess,[2] in the Brāhmaṇas she is identified with Vāch (speech), and in the later myths and to-day is considered the wife of Brahmā, the patroness of letters, and the goddess of wisdom and speech, from which position she is being by degrees ousted by Gaṇeśa (see above, pp. 49, 50). But these three days are her own.

On the first day, Āśvina śukla seventh, when the moon enters the nakshatra Mūla, all the sacred books in the house are collected, an image of the goddess is placed on the top of the pile of them, and her spirit is summoned into it with mantras.

[1] Sharmā, p. 215 f. [2] Vedic Mythology, *E.I.A.R.*, p. 87.

On the second day she is worshipped and on the third her spirit is dismissed, after a gift of money has been offered to her and presented to the presiding priest.

So in Southern and Western India ; in Bengal these days are given to Durgā worship.

(ii) *Lalitā*[1] or *Upāṅgalalitā pañchamī.* (Āśvina śukla fifth.) This is hardly known outside Mahārāshṭra. The legend goes that Lalitā was the patron goddess of a town, Upāṅga, and that by worshipping her on this day the inhabitants gained great prosperity. Her festival is confused in the popular mind with those of Durgā and Sarasvatī.

(iii) *Durgā pūjā.*[2] (Āśvina śukla first to tenth.) Durgā has become identified with the pre-Āryan Kālī of Bengal since Purāṇic times. She is considered the wife and female counterpart of Śiva, as Sarasvatī and Lakshmī are of Brahmā and Vishṇu.

In Bengal, animal sacrifices are offered to her, and it is well-known that human sacrifice would be offered except for the restraining hand of the law. Quoting from the Bhavishya Purāṇa, Sir W. Jones writes : "The head of a slaughtered man[3] gives Durgā one thousand times more satisfaction than that of a buffalo."

In other parts of India the conception of her is less fierce, and offerings of flowers, fruit, etc., are all that are made. She is worshipped during the first ten days of Āśvina, special days being the eighth (her customary monthly day), and the tenth, the day of Victory, the name Vijayā being applied alike to her victory over the buffalo demon Mahishāsura and to Rāma's victory over Rāvaṇa.

The legend goes that a demon so troubled the earth that the inhabitants appealed to the gods, who sent Durgā, the eight-armed world-mother, to fight with him. She fought for ten days, and overcame and slew

[1] Sharmā, p. 215 ; also Molesworth, etc.
[2] Sharmā, p. 212 f. ; also *F. & H.*, p. 20.
[3] *Asiatic Researches*, III, p. 257.

him on the tenth. Except on the tenth day no reference is made to this event in the daily worship offered to her, which is as under :

Each day, after anointing with oil, a ceremonial bath must be taken, both morning and evening. Only one meal is to be eaten, and the goddess must be worshipped three times in the day, with flowers, lamps and the recitation of mantras.

In Bengal, household images of Durgā are used, but in other parts these are rarely seen, an earthenware jar being substituted, in which various grains are put. A thread is wound about it, and it is marked with a lucky symbol in red. A tray placed on the top receives the offerings. On the eighth day women perform a ceremony of burning incense in a saucer, placing it three times alternately in their palms and on their heads; and at midnight the goddess is worshipped with lamps.

In Mahārāshṭra it is chiefly a women's festival, bands of women going daily to worship at a Durgā temple, if one is accessible, otherwise they worship at home ; but in Bengal it is as much a men's as a women's festival.

The celebrations on the tenth day are so mixed, in modern times, with those of the Rāma Victory festival, that it is almost impossible to disentangle them. It is doubtful whether any further ceremony than the final dismissal of the spirit of the goddess belongs properly to the Durgā festival.

(iv) *Vijayā daśamī* or *Dasarā*. (Āśvina śukla tenth.) Several legends are given to explain the origin of this festival, of these the two most popular are : (*a*) That it was the day[1] on which Rāma, having propitiated Durgā, who helped her devotee Rāvaṇa, by longer prayers and better offerings than his enemy's, won her over to his side, and was by her enabled to kill Rāvaṇa ;

*Note*.—The explanation given for commemorating this event in the autumn rather than at the spring Rāma festival in Chaitra,

[1] Mahābhārata, Vana Parva.

is that Rāma began praying to Durgā in the autumn, but did not gain merit sufficient to kill Rāvaṇa until the following spring.

and (*b*) That the five Pāṇḍava brothers, having completed their year's service in disguise, unrecognised, in Virāṭa's palace, took their arms from their hiding place in the Śamī tree, and proceeded to battle against their cousins, the Kauravas, whom they ultimately defeated.

Both legends, therefore, point to this as a day on which to celebrate victory, and to make military displays.

Four or five separate observances are followed on this day, which is a men's, not a women's, festival:

(*a*) The śamī tree[1] (Mimosa suma) is worshipped, and its leaves are distributed to friends under the name of "gold," that is, the gift of such a leaf is supposed to be as valuable as a gift of gold, and is sometimes called a putalī or medal. In many places, where the śamī tree is not procurable, the more common āpta (Bauhinia) is substituted. In some districts an ear of newly ripe grain is also given, under the name of "silver."

(*b*) A bull buffalo is sacrificed, some say in memory of Durgā's victory, some in memory of Rāma's, at a special spot outside the village, in the evening, to preserve the village from sickness. The animal is selected a month beforehand and fattened. The right to perform the sacrifice is hereditary. The head of the buffalo should be severed at a single blow, and the carcass should be buried at the spot.

(*c*) The village bounds are visited by the men and boys, who cross into neighbouring territory, after which they return home with great rejoicings, to be greeted by their women on the house threshold, holding trays containing lamps, rice, supāri nut, and red lead, which they wave round the heads of the men.

(*d*) The implements of a man's trade or profession, or the insignia of his office, are worshipped by him.

[1] Mahābhārata, Virāṭa Parva.

Hence, everything pertaining to war, *e.g.* cannon elephants, guns, horses, etc., are worshipped by the military castes, and incidentally war is glorified in the eyes of all.

(*e*) In Mahārāshṭra, a Śivājī cult is developing. The Dasarā day is kept in his memory, men and boys parade the roads crying: "Śivājī ki jai," and it is evident that this day is considered the one *par excellence* on which to celebrate the spirit of nationalism.

Writing in 1901, Washburn Hopkins[1] said that Śivājī was then developing into a god, his complete deification was only a question of time, and the Census Report of 1901 mentions a temple to Śivājī at Malvan, Ratnagiri district. It is safe to say that Śivājī has already become the patron god of war.

Now, probably, the unifying element, which binds into what is practically one festival the various sectional feasts in honour of the different deities described above, is its seasonal character.

The rainy season is practically over, the early crops are ripe for harvesting, and in ancient days kings were starting their winter campaigns, for roads were becoming dry and traversable. The present day harmless and rather pointless crossing of the village boundary into neighbouring territory, known as शिळंगण, is doubtless the survival of सीमोल्लंघन (breaking boundary) of marauding chieftains; the home coming with presents of "gold," that of the return with the spoils of the raid; and the joyful reception by the women, that of gratitude at their safe return.

The buffalo sacrifice, too, is a survival of ancient times, for it was a well-known custom to sacrifice some animal to propitiate the harvest gods who protect the villages. Hewitt[2] considers it the celebration of the autumn equinox, which falls in Āśvina, the buffalo being a year-god, standing for the Indra of the Ṛigveda.

[1] *India Old and New*, p. 105. [2] Hewitt, pp. 224, 349.

In Nāsik (Bombay), about the year 1909, owing to a dispute between rival claimants for the right of performing the buffalo sacrifice, it was omitted on Dasarā day. An outbreak of cholera the following hot weather was attributed to the omission, and much indignation was felt that a private feud had been allowed to lead to public suffering. A special sacrifice was made at the Hoḷī festival, and representations of buffaloes' heads, together with obscene words, were painted on walls all over the town. This points to the sacrifice as being unconnected with either Durgā or Rāma, but with the propitiation of older, village gods. The later worship of Rāma, Sarasvatī, and Durgā was combined with the old seasonal sacrifice, and the story of the fight of the last-named with a demon in buffalo form was invented to fit in with the existing custom.

7. *Kojāgarī*,[1] full moon. (Āśvina śukla fifteenth.) This harvest festival is kept at Āśvinī full moon. It is also called Navānna (new food), and from this day the new grain of the recent harvest may be eaten. Since Lakshmī, wife of Vishṇu, has come to be regarded as the bringer of good fortune, and arbitrary in her bestowal of favours, she is to be worshipped this night, when she is believed to be abroad, and a light must be shown outside the house, otherwise she may refuse to pause and give her blessing. For the same reason everyone must keep awake all night, lest the careless man who sleeps fail to win her blessing. The rule that the night should be spent in playing dice (typical of the uncertainty of fortune), and that cocoanut milk (typical of fertility) should be drunk at midnight, are both, probably, precautions and aids to keeping awake.

There is a legend of a king who had an iron image of Alakshmī (Ill-fortune, the reputed sister of Lakshmī) in his palace. He grew gradually poor and troubled. Through the diligence of his wife's worship of Lakshmī, at the Kojāgarī full moon, the iron image

[1] *Hindu Year*, p. 20; *F. & H.*, 48; Sharmā, 222 f.; Gupte, p. 105 f.

melted away, and good fortune returned. Hence the worship was established.

Here, again, the night of rejoicing at the harvest moon was the original feast, the introduction of Lakshmī a later addition.

*Note.*—

In North India a similar feast is held on Mārgaśīrsha : full moon.
,, South India ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, Pausha : ,, ,,
,, parts of the Deccan ,, ,, ,, ,, Māgha : ,, ,,

8. *Lakshmī pūjā and Dīpāvali.* (Āṣvinī kṛishṇa thirteenth to Kārttika śukla second.) This festival is, like Dasarā, compounded of some five different festivals, *viz.* (i) worship of wealth; (ii) the celebration of Vishṇu's victory over the demon Naraka ; (iii) Lakshmī worship ; (iv) the celebration of Vishṇu's victory over the demon Bali; and (v) the expression of brotherly and sisterly affection. These will all be described separately.

(i) *Dhana trayodaśī* (Wealth, thirteenth). This occurs on the thirteenth of Āśvina kṛishṇa, the first day of the Dīpāvali festival. All must begin the day with bathing after anointing with oil. The special observances for this day chiefly concern merchants, who close their yearly accounts, sweep and tidy their shops and offices, and, having collected all their account books, together with a pile of silver coins, worship them and Lakshmī, the giver of wealth. Turmeric and red lead are freely smeared over the coins, as the many stained rupees in circulation after the festival bear witness. The women are engaged in scouring the house and cooking-pots, preparing cakes and sweetmeats for the five days' holiday, hanging garlands over doorways, elaborately decorating the ground before the door with lucky patterns in fine flour, etc.

Schools are closed from the preceding day, and boys let off squibs and crackers in the streets and courtyards, although this belongs properly to the following days of festival. Lamps are lighted from this evening and kept burning throughout the five nights.

(ii) *Naraka chaturdaśī* (Hell fourteenth). (See also Chapter VI, p. 116). On this second day of the

festival is celebrated the destruction of Narakāsura by Vishṇu. One account says that in his Kṛishṇa incarnation he fought with and killed the demon, and another, the Bhavishyottara Purāṇa, gives as origin the well-known Bali story, as under :

King Bali, by his devotion to Śiva, had gained so much merit and power that he used it to trouble gods and men. Therefore Vishṇu became incarnate as a dwarf, Vāmana, and went to King Bali in the guise of a mendicant, asking, as alms, as much ground as he could cover in three steps. The boon being granted, he assumed a huge form, and took three strides, with the first covering the earth, with the second the heavens, and with the third treading Bali down into the nether regions (Naraka or hell). Thereafter, relenting for having treated Bali harshly, Vishṇu granted him the kingdom of Naraka, and three days annually to reign on earth wherever no lamps were lighted.

Naturally, therefore, men light lamps in every building, to avoid falling again under Bali's power.

A connection evidently arose in men's minds between this Bali, King of hell, and Yama, Lord of the dead, for we find another legend attributing this festival to another cause, *viz.* the tradition that where lamps are shown, the deceased forefathers of that household will see the light, and, being released from Yama's clutches, rise and proceed to Heaven, *i.e.* स्वर्ग (Indra's abode). Therefore offerings are made to Yama.

*Note.*—Sir W. Jones[1] says that the lights are to guide spirits of kinsmen who have died abroad, or in battle, to Yama's halls.

Again, a legend[2] is told that once, on the birth of a son to King Haima, his death from snake bite was prophesied to occur on the fourth day after marriage. In order to cheat fate, the boy was carefully kept in a snakeproof suite of rooms, built on an island in the river Yamunā.

But on the fateful day a snake was produced from King Haima's sneeze, and the boy was bitten and died.

[1] *Asiatic Researches*, III, p. 25 f. [2] Sharmā, p. 223.

At so sorrowful an event even Yama's messengers, who came to carry away the boy's spirit, felt pity, and asked their lord if nothing could be done to avert such calamities.

Yama said that the lighting of lamps every evening, from Āśvina krishṇa thirteenth to Kārttika śukla second, would avert a violent death.

The ceremonies for this day are two, *viz.*

(*a*) Very special bathing after anointing with oil, followed by putting on new clothes. A Mahārāshṭra saying is, नरक चतुर्दशीचे दिवशीं तेलामध्यें लक्ष्मी व जलामध्यें गंगा वास करिते. ("On Naraka fourteenth Lakshmī [*i.e.* beauty] dwells in oil and Gaṅgā [*i.e.* cleanliness] in water.")

Even the poorest manage to obtain some new garment for this day.

(*b*) Lighting lamps in every house and Vaishṇava temple. The rich have costly illuminations, the poor at least one small lamp. Squibs, crackers and more elaborate fireworks are lighted.

It is a time for family reunions, rejoicing and feasting, a significant name for it in Mahārāshṭra being चाव दिवस (vulgarly, "Chewing day").

(iii) *Lakshmī pūjā.* (Āśvina new moon.) On this third and middle day of the festival Lakshmī is worshipped in the evening, after an all-day fast. A small altar is prepared, and such images of gods as the household possesses are placed upon it, with Lakshmī in the place of honour. Fruit and flowers are offered with mantras, and afterwards the family feast and continue the rejoicings of the previous day.

*Note.*—In Bengal Kālī is worshipped, with a clay figure, instead of Lakshmī, whose place, and that of Sarasvatī, she has practically taken.

Some, on this day, offer propitiatory worship, with black offerings, to Alakshmī, goddess of adversity, to induce her to keep away.

(iv) *Dīpāvalī* proper, or *Bali worship day.* (Kārttika śukla first.) In some parts of India this is the first day of the year, and it is kept as such by traders all over

the country, who open their new account books this day. Besides this custom four others are found, *viz.*

(*a*) Bali himself is worshipped in Mahārāshṭra, in compensation, it is said, for having lost his kingdom. A representation of him is made and offerings of fruit, flowers, etc., are given, the following verse being sung: ईडापीडा जावो । बळिचें राज्य येवो ("May all troubles depart and Bali's kingdom come").[1] The same verse is also sung by bands of men of the non-caste races, who go about begging.

The wish expressed in this verse is not compatible with the rejoicings at Bali's defeat, and the lighting of lamps on purpose to keep clear of him, and, as it is more common among the low-castes, Manwaring[2] is probably right in ascribing it to the Śūdras, whose champion, King Bali, was against the overbearing higher castes. If this is correct, we have the interesting sight of a festival kept by the descendants of two parties to a long-ago struggle, both camps celebrating both protagonists on successive days.

(*b*) A tug-of-war is held between high-caste and low-caste men, holding the ends of a pole wrapped in darbha grass. (This is another sign of the probability of an inter-caste feud as origin. It is not much observed nowadays.)

(*c*) In Bengal Bali worship is unknown, and in its place we have the launching, on a stream, by women and girls, at twilight, of small saucers containing each a lamp. If the lamp founders, or drifts ashore again, the year will bring misfortune; but if it floats safely downstream, the year will be happy.

(*d*) Cow and bullock worship. The animals are washed, fed, and adorned with garlands, etc., then worshipped and led round the village, and on coming home lighted lamps are waved round them to ward off evil spirits. (See Poḷā and Bendūra, Chap. VI, p. 118.)

[1] *Marāṭhī Proverbs*, Manwaring, p. 137.
[2] Ibid.

(v) *Yama or Bhāūbīja dvitīyā.* (Kārttika śukla second.) This is the last day of the festival. The daily bathing, anointing with oil and lighting of lamps continues, but to-day's chief feature is the exchange of amenities between brothers and sisters, to celebrate Yama's dining with his sister Yamunā. Every man and boy must dine to-day in his sister's house; failing a sister a cousin is considered an equivalent. In exchange for the feast provided, he is expected to make a present of clothing, coin or jewellery, according to his means. Since Yama is believed to have shut up his house this day while visiting his sister, no one dying to-day will have to go to Yama's abode.

Besides this custom, some worship Yama at noon, making offerings to his image, and those who have the opportunity bathe in the river Yamunā (Jamnā).

With this day the festival ends.

The Dīpāvalī is considered the special festival of the Vaiśya caste, as the Rākhī pūrṇimā, the Dasarā and the Hoḷī are of the Brāhman, Kshatriya and Śūdra castes. It was the new year of former days,[1] referred by some to the King Vikramāditya round whom so much controversy rages (Chap. I, p. 15), and the beginning of the Samvat era called by his name. Some say it celebrates the crowning of Rāma on his return from Laṅkā. And as this same reason is one of those given for the rejoicings on the present new year (Chaitra first), it adds to the proof that this was a seasonal, *i.e.* a new year festival.

The modern Hindu considers it symbolic of the triumph of the light of knowledge over the darkness of ignorance.

*The Yugādi.* (Anniversaries of the beginnings of the Yuga.) Four days in each year are appointed as anniversaries of the four Yuga of the present world-age (Chap. I, p. 14). These differ slightly in different parts of India. The days are as under:

[1] Gupte, *I.A.*, XXXII, p. 237.

| | *F. & H. and Lunar Year* | *Bombay Pañchāṅga, etc.* |
|---|---|---|
| Satya (Kṛita) Yuga began | Vaiśākha śu. third | Kārttika śu. ninth |
| Tretā ,, | Kārttika śu. ninth | Vaiśākha śu. third |
| Dvāpara ,, | Bhādra. kṛi. thirteenth | Māgha new moon |
| Kali ,, | Māgha full moon | Bhādra. kṛi. thirteenth |

On all of these days one should bathe in some sacred river, give alms to Brāhmans, and offer sesamum seed and water to the spirits of the departed. This water offering is called Tarpaṇa.

The Tretā and Dvāpara Yugādi are not much observed. To keep the Tretā properly an empty gourd should be filled with gold, silver, or jewels, and given to a Brāhman, to procure a place in heaven. The Kali Yugādi, on Māgha full moon, is kept as a bathing festival throughout North India ; but the greatest of the four is the Satya Yugādi, the beginning of the Satya Yuga, and consequently of the present world-age. This day is known as *Akshayya*[1] *tritīyā*, and is kept throughout India on Vaiśākha śukla third, even in Mahārāshṭra, where it is not counted as the anniversary of the Satya but of the Tretā Yuga.

To bathe this day, and to give fans, umbrellas and money to Brāhmans is believed to earn imperishable (akshayya) merit. The performance of it is consequently very popular. If it occurs on a Wednesday, especially if the moon is in the Rohiṇī nakshatra, it is even more auspicious. Fresh cold water is put in a vessel, and in the water camphor, myrrh, supāri nuts, coins, flowers, sacred rice and dūrvā grass. A cocoanut is placed on the top, and the whole is garlanded, worshipped, and given to a Brāhman with a tulasī leaf. This ceremony is known as Ūdakumbhadāna (myrrh-pot-gift).

In Bengal and Orissa a flower festival is held at this time and lasts for three weeks. It is called

*Chandana Yātrā*, and flowers and fans, scented with sandal (chandana) oil are presented to Brāhmans. At

[1] *Hindu Year*, p. 10 ; Gupte, p. 5 ; Sharmā, p. 34.

Purī, the image of Madanamohana, substituted for that of Jagannātha, is daily taken out to the Narendra tank, put in a boat, and taken round with music. It is also anointed with oil and bathed.

At the śrāddha performed in the last half of Bhādrapada (see Chap. VI, p. 114), the meal and offerings are considered to be given less to the Brāhman, who acts as medium, than to the spirits of the departed. On Akshayya third, the person of the medium is much more to the fore. The cool water and sacred rice are given for the departed, but the fan and umbrella, and especially the coin in the water-pot, are for the living recipient. This day comes at the beginning of the hot season, and it is evidently believed that the dead still continue to feel heat and thirst.

The Gaurī celebrations, which began on Chaitra śukla third (see p. 100), end to-day; Gaurī is believed to return to her husband's house after a month's holiday in her parents' home. Many women in Mahārāshṭra give a final party to their friends, when a present of halad-kuṅkū (*i.e.* turmeric and red lead powder) is handed to each guest.

# CHAPTER IV

## ON LUNAR AND PLANETARY FESTIVALS

### I. Moon Worship

Moon worship was as natural to primitive man as sun worship; and although the moon had not that effect upon the seasons and harvests which caused the sun to be recognised as so great an influence in human life, yet its greater visibility, its mysterious waxing and waning, and the variation in the time of its nightly appearance, all united to make it an object of study and reverence.

In Vedic and post-Vedic times the moon, as an object of worship, was inferior to the sun (Hopkins[1] says, it was "never a god of much importance"), but some believe that in the yet earlier days of the Āryans, before the immigration into India, moon[2] and star worship preceded sun worship, and the tracing of the moon's path through the nakshatra was the earliest developed side of Hindu astronomy.

During Vedic times,[3] and afterwards increasingly, the moon came to be identified with the plant Soma, from which was extracted the drink of the gods (itself immortalised). The grounds for this identification are not clear. They are indicated in passages in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa,[4] in which the belief is expressed that on the night of new moon he visits the earth.

"When he is not seen that night either in the East or in the West, then he visits this world; and here he enters into the waters and plants. . . . Having collect-

[1] Epic Mythology, *E.I.A.R.*, p. 89. [2] Hewitt, pp. 351-52.
[3] Vedic Myth, *E.I.A.R.*, p. 104. [4] *S.B.E.*, XII, p. 176.

ed him from water and plants [via the milk of cows who have eaten him], he, being reproduced from libations, becomes visible in the Western sky."

Again, the Petersburg Dictionary gives इन्दु = a drop (applied to soma) and इन्दु = spark (applied to the moon). Hence both were called by the same name, which possibly was one cause leading to their final identification.

As was to be expected, many legends grew as explanations of the monthly waxing and waning of the moon, and of its occasional eclipse.

With regard to the former, the two most popular are that in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa,[1] *i.e.* that the moon waxes till the full, while approaching the sun, when it is seized, eaten and sucked dry, and then thrown out to begin to swell again, and the later[2] one to the effect that the twenty-seven nakshatras were wives of the moon, of whom Rohiṇī was his favourite. His devotion to her aroused the jealous anger of the other twenty-six, who caused him to be attacked by consumption. Through austerities and worship he recovered, temporarily, from his sickness, only to be attacked anew every month, as soon as health is established.

The legend of the origin of eclipses, whether solar or lunar, has been given above (p. 28).

1. *Amāvāsyā* (new moon) and *Pūrṇimā* (full moon). In Vedic times the full moon, new moon, and eclipse days were ordained as whole-day fasts, or at most as one-meal days. On the full moon, sacrifices of rice, soma, sweet and sour milk were offered to Agni-Soma, and on the new moon to Indra-Agni, and there seems reason to believe these were originally animal or even human sacrifices, very elaborate and requiring two days for their observance.

Oldenberg says that these new and full moon sacrifices, both of which he connects with Indra, do not imply that Indra worship had any connection with the

[1] *S.B.E.*, XII, p. 182.

[2] Epic Mythology, *E.I.A.R.*, p. 89.

[3] *Religion des Veda* (Prof. V. Henry's trans., p. 376).

phases of the moon, which was merely a dial noting the hours at which honour should be paid to this most powerful of the gods. So that these bi-monthly sacrifices were not originally moon worship at all.

The reason for the fast is variously given. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[1] says that the performance of the sacrificial rite necessitates the presence of the gods: "Now, as it would even be unbecoming for him to take food, before men (staying with him as his guests) have eaten, how much more would it be so, if he were to take food before the gods (who are staying with him) have eaten; let him, therefore, take no food at all." Āpastamba[2] gives a different reason: "During the day the sun protects, during the night the moon. Therefore, on the new moon night one must protect oneself by rites, purity, etc., especially as the spirits of the Fathers, who live in the moon, awake on the new moon day and are most active, and likely to influence men."

All who make any claim to orthodoxy, fast and worship the moon on new and full moon days at the present time. There is also a custom in Mahārāshṭra of plucking a thread from an old garment, and throwing it towards the new moon, as an offering, in the hope that he will grant a new garment. This is called the Daśī vāhana, or new moon offering.

The origin of the name Amāvāsyā (from Amā = together, at home, and vas = to dwell) has been explained to mean, either that the sun and moon are dwelling together at that time, or that (see above) the moon is dwelling with water and plants on the earth. Many of the Seasonal and other festivals are held on new or full moon days.

2. *Parvan*[3] *days*. The sixth, eighth, and tenth of each half month were known as Parvan days, on which fasting and chastity were to be observed, but they are disregarded to-day by the ordinary Hindu.

[1] *S.B.E.*, XII, p. 5. [2] *S.B.E.*, II, p. 94.
[3] Laws of Manu, *S.B.E.*, III, p. 45.

3. *Vināyakī* (Obstacle remover) *Saṁkashṭa* (Difficulty) days.

The moon is worshipped by some on the fourth of every light and dark half, a fast being kept all day until after dark. But this custom is becoming merged in Gaṇeśa worship, the devotees of whom fast on these same days, worshipping him in the dark half at moon-rise; the names too, "Obstacle Remover" and "Difficulty," refer to him, not to the moon.

Another instance of the connection between Gaṇeśa and the moon is the fact that on Gaṇeśa chaturthī[1] (Bhādrapada śukla fourth) it is thought most inauspicious to see the moon. If one sees it by accident, he throws stones on to the roof of a neighbour's house, in order to draw abuse upon himself, and so avert the evil. This custom is so prevalent that the day is sometimes called दगडी चौथ ("Stone-throwing fourth"), and the Marāṭhī expression, चौथीचा चंद्र पाहणें ("To see the fourth day moon"), is an equivalent for suffering calamity.

The legend is that the moon once laughed at seeing Gaṇeśa fall off his rat steed, which so much incensed the elephant-headed god that he cursed the moon and all who ever beheld it. Relenting later, he removed the curse, except for this one night in the year.

The object of drawing down abuse by stoning a house roof is that, being under a curse and liable to calamity, it is better to court a light one, deliberately, without delay, than to go in fear of a heavy one falling unexpectedly; also that bad language scares away evil spirits (see p. 45).

4. *Somavatī.*[2] A new moon falling on a Monday is a day specially to be observed by fasting and bathing, since great merit accrues from so doing. Besides bathing one should wear a silk garment, keep silence, and circumambulate a pippal tree one hundred and eight times. Gold, jewels and fruit should be offered to the tree, and afterwards given to a Brāhman. Cotton and radishes (both white) must not be touched. Ordinary

[1] Sharmā, p. 80. [2] Gupte, p. 159; *Hindu Year*, p. 7.

people do not observe this last, but they will lay fruit at the foot of a pippal tree.

5. *Light half second.* This day in every month is sacred to the moon, and is to be worshipped on it.

6. *All Mondays.* The moon, besides becoming identified with the plant Soma, became closely connected with Śiva, and both are worshipped on Mondays.

## II. Star or Planet Worship

This is not very common and occurs chiefly in the month of Śrāvaṇa. The pole star is, however, an object of worship at weddings, by the bride and bridegroom.

1 and 2. *Mercury*[1] and *Jupiter* are worshipped on all the Wednesdays and Thursdays respectively of Śrāvaṇa, of which days they are the lords. They are worshipped in the morning with garlands. If grain is desired, figures of these planets are drawn on the cornbin; if wealth, on the store-chest; and it is hoped the desire will find fulfilment.

3. *Venus*[2] is worshipped on Fridays in Śrāvaṇa. Although the planet Śukra is considered by Hindus masculine, not feminine, yet it is interesting to note that Śukra worship has become merged in Lakshmī worship, and that the Śrāvaṇa Friday fast (until 4.0 p.m.) is performed with a view to obtaining benefits from that goddess.

4. *Saturn*[3] is worshipped on all Śrāvaṇa Saturdays, with the object of obtaining wealth. These days are known as Sampat Śanivāra (wealth Saturdays), and a special rite is performed, *i.e.* a platfrom is erected at the foot of a pippal tree, and on it a picture of Saturn is drawn, resembling the traditional figure of Yama, with noose and cudgel, and seated on a buffalo. The tree is circumambulated, and black offerings are made,

[1] Gupte.
[2] Gupte, pp. 48, 50-54; *Bom. Gaz.*, XVIII, p. 241.
[3] Gupte.

such as black salt, charcoal, or a buffalo. An iron ring may also be worn to propitiate the god.

The worship of Hanumān or Māruti, the monkey god, is becoming combined with that of Saturn. Enthoven[1] says, that in the Konkan Sampat Śanivāra is kept as a whole-day fast, and offerings are made, with the object of gaining wealth, to Māruti, not to Saturn. (So also the *Bombay Gazetteer.*)

No trace is found of the Mars worship on the Śrāvaṇa Tuesdays which would be expected, but Tuesdays are devoted to the worship of Gaurī. Again, all Mondays are devoted to the worship of Śiva more than to that of the moon.

The following table shows the trend at the present day to substitute other deities for those of the lords of the week days:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sunday | Sun worship | | | | |
| Monday | Moon ,, | (decreasing) | Siva worship | (increasing) |
| Tuesday | Mars ,, | (died out) | Gaurī ,, | (established) |
| Wednesday | Mercury ,, | | | |
| Thursday | Jupiter ,, | | | |
| Friday | Venus ,, | (decreasing) | Lakshmī ,, | (increasing) |
| Saturday | Saturn ,, | | Hanumān,, | |

5. *Ṛishi pañchamī*[2] (Seers' fifth), or *Prāyaśchit* (Atonement). Bhādrapada śukla fifth.

On this day and on Śrāvaṇa full moon (see p. 133) stars, other than the planets, are worshipped; the single survival (excepting the pole star worship at weddings, see p. 70) of what is likely to have been common in ancient days. In Vedic times the spirits of certain departed great seers of the earth were believed to inhabit certain of the stars, the most famous being the Seven of the North, *i.e.* the seven brightest stars of the constellation Ursa Major. Later, the seers became identified with the stars they inhabited.

The seven worshipped on Ṛishi fifth are as under: Kaśyapa, Atri, Bharadvāja, Viśvāmitra, Gautama,

[1] Folklore of Konkan, *I.A.*, XLIII, p. 21.

[2] *Hindu Year*, pp. 18, 34; Molesworth, सप्तऋषी.

Jamadagni and Vasishṭha ;[1] or Kratu, Pulaha, Pulastya, Atri, Aṅgirasa, Vasishṭha and Marīchi.[2] With whom is usually associated Arundhatī, the wife of Vasishṭha (the fainter star close to the middle one of the "bear's tail").

This is a women's festival, and worship is offered to atone for unwitting sin committed by reason of impurity. At least two legends with regard to it are current.

(i) A woman, through neglecting the laws regarding impurity, became reborn as a dog, her husband as an ox,




THE SEVEN OF THE NORTH ("GREAT") BEAR

for he also had sinned, although unconsciously, through having eaten food cooked by her. They lived in the home of their married son. The day on which the son was to perform their śrāddha arrived, and the daughter-in-law was cooking the food to be offered to the Brāhman guests. While she was out of the room, a snake in the roof dropped poison in the cooking pot, and the dog, to save her son from the charge of murder which would attach to him if his guests ate the food and were poisoned, defiled the food. When the daughter-in-law returned and saw the dog with its head in the dish, she was very angry, and drove it from the house with blows and curses. The dog took refuge in the ox's stall, and, the cup of their suffering being now full, their plea to

[1] Sharmā, p. 194 ; Enthoven, *I.A.*, XL, p. 26.
[2] Colebrooke, *Asiatic Res.*, IX, p. 323, etc.

the gods for the gift of speech was granted, and they told their story to their son. He consulted a priest as to means for releasing his parents from their degraded condition. The priest explained the rites to be performed by the daughter-in-law, upon the observance of which the parents, becoming released, repaired to heaven. The daughter-in-law, fearful of incurring a similar fate, continued the rite annually, and the custom became established.

(ii) The widowed daughter of a religious teacher, living with her parents, while resting one day after hard work, fell into a deep sleep, and was transformed into a heap of worms. Her father, distressed, sought in meditation the cause of this transformation, and it was revealed to him that in her former life she had defiled the cooking pots, by using them when she should have remained apart, owing to impurity.

The only possible expiation was for her mother to keep the Ṛishi fifth as ordained, on her daughter's behalf. This being done, the girl was released from the curse, and from the sin.

In both legends the cause of the drastic punishment was the same, and the dread of a similar fate is felt very really to-day; so that the rites are carefully observed. A woman, who is prevented from observing it on the appointed day, must do so on Vāmana Dvādaśī, a week later.

The ceremonies are performed at noon. A woman must offer a mantra to the aghāḍa plant, clean her teeth with a twig one hundred and eight times, and bathe, if possible in a stream, dipping one hundred and eight times, otherwise at home, pouring one hundred and eight potsful of water over herself. The previous anointing is to be with sesamum oil, dried myrobalan dust, and earth, and she must drink pañchagavya.[1] Afterwards she should assemble with other women, and worship the seven seers as follows:

[1] The five products of the cow, *viz.* milk, curds, ghī, dung, and urine.

Lucky symbols are drawn in colour on a board, on which is placed a copper vessel filled with clean water and wrapped in a new cloth. Then eight small heaps of rice are made (for the seven and Arundhatī), and on each heap is put a supāri nut or a pavitra, *i.e.* a ring made of darbha grass. Coins, perfume, flowers and rice are put in the pot, and all these are worshipped with mantras. Afterwards the officiating priest receives presents and his fee, and gives his blessing.

On this day nothing grown from bullocks' labour must be eaten. An onion must be bitten into and then thrown into a stream.

Some say this should be repeated every year, others that it will suffice if performed for any seven successive years. The point which remains shrouded in obscurity is the connection between the seven seers and a woman's impurity.

## CHAPTER V

### ON VISHṆU AND ŚIVA FESTIVALS

#### I. Vishṇu Festivals

1. *The Avatāra* (incarnations). Vishṇu was a Vedic god; and the legend of his covering earth and sky in three strides is more than once mentioned in the Ṛigveda. At a later date, he received the great epithet Nārāyaṇa, an early divine name connected with the creation. When the epic poems were turned into Vaishṇava scriptures, probably in the second century B.C., Kṛishṇa, the hero of the Mahābhārata, and Rāma, the hero of the Rāmāyaṇa, were declared to be incarnations of Vishṇu.

Thereafter the theory developed rapidly, many semi-divine beings found in the earlier literature being reinterpreted as incarnations of Vishṇu. Even Buddha became an incarnation, sent into the world by Vishṇu to deceive evil men into accepting the false faith Buddhism! All Hindus recognize ten incarnations of Vishṇu, but among certain groups of Vaishṇavas as many as thirty-nine are acknowledged and worshipped.

Festival days are appointed in honour of these incarnations; and those in honour of Rāma and Kṛishṇa are observed all over India. The days in honour of the Man-lion, Dwarf, and Rāma-with-the-axe are much less observed, while the three first and the two last are not noticed, except by priests and the ultra-orthodox.

Vishṇu is considered the protector and preserver of men, beneficent and kind. The ten incarnations are as follows:

(i) *Matsyāvatāra* or Fish incarnation. Chaitra śukla third. The earliest form of this legend[1] occurs in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, where Manu, the ancestor of the human race, is drawn through the waters of the deluge in a boat, by a fish, to a place of safety. No mention is there made of the identity of the fish with Vishṇu.

(ii) *Kūrmāvatāra* or Tortoise incarnation. Vaiśākha śukla fifteenth. The Purāṇic story[2] goes that at the churning of the milky ocean by demons and gods, Vishṇu, assuming the form of a tortoise, took Mount Meru, the churning post, on his back, as the earth was beginning to sink, and supported it. The Śatapatha Brahmaṇa[3] says that Prajāpati assumed a tortoise form to create living beings. The figure of a tortoise, carved in the stone pavement, is not uncommon outside Vishṇu temples.

(iii) *Varāhāvatāra* or Boar incarnation. Bhādrapada śukla third. In the Ṛigveda[4] both Indra and Vishṇu are connected with the slaying of a boar, although neither is identified with the animal. In the Śatapatha Brahmaṇa[5] reference is made to a boar lifting up the earth, and "he was her lord Prajāpati." The incarnation theory appears in the Rāmāyaṇa, and in several of the Purāṇas. The Purāṇic story is that the earth being in danger of destruction through a great deluge, Vishṇu became a boar, and upheld it on his tusks. The modern interpretation is that the boar is Sacrifice personified, *i.e.* that by which the world is raised to a spiritual level from the ocean of evil.

(iv) *Nṛisiṁhāvatāra* or Man-lion incarnation. Vaiśākha śukla fourteenth. The Purāṇic story[6] is that Pralhāda, son of Hiraṇyakaśipu, a demon king, was an earnest devotee of Vishṇu. His father tried in vain to turn him from his devotion, but he was preserved in all attempts on his life and continued his prayers, insisting on the existence and immanence of Vishṇu. Eventually

[1] Myth. Studies in R. V., A. A. Macdonell, *J.R.A.S.*, XXVII, p. 166.
[2] Bhāg. Pu., I, pp. 3-16.
[3] *S.B.E.*, XII, p. 216.
[4] I, 61-7, and VIII, 77-10.
[5] *S.B.E.*, XLIV, p. 451.
[6] Bhāg. Pu., VII, 8-12.

Hiraṇyakaśipu challenged his son to prove the presence of Vishṇu in a certain pillar, whereupon Vishṇu, in a shape half man half lion, sprang from the pillar and killed him.

Those who observe this day[1] must take only one meal on the thirteenth and bathe at noon on the fourteenth. In the evening the officiating priest must make a heap of rice, wheat, or other grain, placing on it a pot of water, and on that a tray containing a gold image of Nṛisiṁha, which is to be worshipped. A vigil is observed all that night, next morning the image is again worshipped, and given to the priest, after the spirit has been dismissed from it.

The use of the golden image precludes the general observance of this rite, and the day is not very much remembered, although the legend is a favourite one, and constantly quoted as proof of the immanence of God in inanimate things.

At Purī the image of Jagannātha is covered with flowers, and wears a lion's face mask on this day.

These first four incarnations are believed to have occurred in the first or Satya yuga of our present world-age.

(v) *Vāmanāvatāra* or Dwarf incarnation. Bhādrapada śukla twelfth. The legend of this incarnation has already been given (p. 60). Vishṇu became Vāmana in order to destroy Bali. The story is found in the Rāmāyaṇa,[2] and a slight reference to it is made in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[3] ("Vishṇu was a dwarf"). The modern explanation is that the merit Bali gained by piety and devotion was cancelled by the sin of pride. But popular sentiment is inclined to be on the side of Bali, and Vāmana is not a favourite god. The word "vāmana" means, when applied to anyone, a cheat or deceiver.

Those who observe this day[4] fast on the eleventh and worship the god at noon. A water vessel, in which are flowers, rice, etc., is placed on a heap

[1] Sharmā, p. 52.
[2] I, 32.
[3] *S.B.E.*, XII, p. 59.
[4] Sharmā, p. 201; *Hindu Year*, p. 18.

of grain, and covered with a tray containing rice in which is stood an image of Vāmana, in the dress of a mendicant. This is worshipped with mantras. A vigil must be kept all night, one must bathe at dawn on the twelfth and repeat the previous day's worship; afterwards a feast is held. The observance, where followed, is chiefly by women, it may be seen among the Deccani Brāhmans, and one feature is the inviting of a young Brāhman boy, whose thread ceremony has been performed but who is still unmarried, to the feast. He is considered the personification of Vāmana (probably on account of his short stature), and is given presents of a loin-cloth, shoes, an umbrella, and a mendicant's staff.

(vi) *Paraśurāmāvatāra* or Rāma-with-the-axe incarnation. Vaiśākha śukla third. The legend of this incarnation is found in the Mahābhārata.[1] He was the fifth son of the sage, Jamadagni, and his wife Reṇukā, and at his father's command killed his mother, who had fallen, through envy, from the high estate of her pious ascetic life. This murder was not considered a crime, but rather an act of filial piety, which was rewarded by Jamadagni's restoring Reṇukā to life, releasing her from her sin, and granting Paraśurāma long life and invincibility. This double boon enabled him to carry out the purpose of his birth, *viz*. the extermination of the Kshatriya race. Their king, Kārtavīrya, had made a raid on Jamadagni's forest dwelling, and carried off the calf of his cow which provided the milk for his oblations. Jamadagni killed Kārtavīrya, whose sons retaliated by killing Jamadagni. So the feud arose, and the whole Kshatriya caste incurred Paraśurāma's anger. With his famous axe "thrice seven times did he clear the earth of the Kshatriya caste." Having exterminated them, and finding no place for himself and his Brāhmans on the Konkan shore, he demanded land from the sea.[2] On being

[1] Vana Parvan.

[2] Enthoven, *I.A.*, XLIV, p. 25; *Folklore of Konkan.*

refused, he strung his bow to shoot back the sea, but the arrow fell short and he reclaimed but a narrow strip of land.

He is also credited with having cleft the Brahmakund gorge with his axe, to set free the Brahmaputra river.[1] He finally retired to the Mahendra mountain, where he still lives.

The legend probably commemorates an old feud leading to constant warfare between Brāhmans and Kshatriyas. Paraśurāma's worship is not at all general, being chiefly observed in the Konkan, where his battles are reputed to have taken place. He is the special diety of the Chitpāvana Brāhmans (Konkanāstha), and is worshipped at Chipluna, and wherever a temple is dedicated to him, on the evening of Vaiśākha śukla third.

(vii) *Rāmachandrāvatāra*. Chaitra śukla ninth to eleventh. The story of Rāma is too well known to need inclusion here. He was a popular epic hero before he came to be considered a Vishṇu incarnation. Hermann Jacobi[2] points out that in Books II to VI of the Rāmāyaṇa there is no suggestion of divinity about him. He was the human hero-prince, and only in Books I and VII, admittedly not earlier than the second century A.D., is the theory of his divinity put forward. Rāma worship has thus existed from that date; and there is a fair amount of mediæval Rāma literature, shewing that the god was continuously popular; but his great vogue in North India dates from Rāmānanda of the fifteenth century, and from the poet Tulsī Dās of the sixteenth century, who wrote his Rāmāyaṇa in the Hindī tongue that all might read it. Since then Rāma worship has been very widespread; the places associated with his life are places of pilgrimage, and his birthday is a day of great rejoicing at all his temples. For the first nine days of Chaitra[3] readings from the Rāmāyaṇa are given, and at noon on the ninth his birth is announced to the

[1] Anderson, *J.R.A S.*, XXXII, p. 791.
[2] Incarnation (Indian), *E.R.E.*, VII, p. 193.
[3] *Hindu Year*, p. 8; Sharmā, p. 20.

assembled crowds before the temple, and in some places the small image of a baby is displayed.

On the ninth, called Rāmanavamī, a fast is kept, and a vigil on the succeeding night. His image, with that of his wife Sītā and his brother Lakshmaṇa, is worshipped in every home with mantras.

Rejoicing, bathing and feasting mark the second day of the festival, which if kept aright will cleanse even from the sin of Brāhmanicide. The feast in Mahārāshṭra is prolonged until midnight of the eleventh, car processions being held at the larger temples on that day at evening.

The above fifth, sixth and seventh incarnations are believed to have occurred in the second or Tretā yuga of the present world-age.

(viii) *Kṛishṇāvatāra*. Śrāvaṇa kṛishṇa eighth. This is the only incarnation celebrated in the dark half of a month ; the name of the god, "the dark one," is probably the reason for this. As stated above, the identifying of Rāma and Kṛishṇa, the heroes of the Epics, with Vishṇu and Nārāyaṇa, was the starting-point of the Vishṇu incarnation theories.

Barth[1] identifies Kṛishṇa with an "Indian Hercules," whose worship Megasthenes found in the Ganges valley in the third century B.C., and agrees that he is probably the most ancient of the incarnations. The story of Kṛishṇa's birth and childhood is, like that of Rāma's, too well known to need insertion here. It is found in the Mahābhārata[2] and some of the Purāṇas, and numerous legends have grown up about him. Bhandārkar[3] says that the stories of his boyhood in Gokula were unknown until about the beginning of the Christian era.

Kṛishṇa worship has existed continuously in the Vaishṇava sects from the second century B.C., but was immensely strengthened by the great popularity of Vaishṇava Bhakti from A.D. 900 onward. The Marāṭhī

[1] *Religions of India*, trans. Wood, p. 168.
[2] Vana Parvan, V.
[3] Bhandārkar, *E.I.A.R.*, pp. 36, 37.

poets, from Jñānadev (thirteenth century) to Tukārām (seventeenth century), in Western India ; Nimbārka, in the North ; Vallabha (fifteenth century), in the South ; and Chaitanya, in Bengal, all developed Kṛishṇa, Kṛishṇa-Rādhā or Kṛishṇa-Rukmiṇī worship, of which the purest form was the last, Rukmiṇī being regarded as his wife, Rādhā as his mistress.

He is believed to have lived at the close of the third or Dvāpara yuga of our present world-age ; the beginning of the Kali yuga dating from the day of his death.

To keep the festival aright,[1] on the seventh of the dark half an elaborate presentation of the birth-room should be made, with images of Devakī and the infant Kṛishṇa, in gold, brass, plaster, etc., also one of Yaśodā with her girl baby, who was exchanged with Kṛishṇa to preserve the latter from death at the hands of his uncle Kaṁsa. At midnight Kṛishṇa is to be worshipped with mantras. A complete fast is to be kept, during the whole of the eighth tithi, irrespective of the hour of the solar day or night at which it begins or ends.

On the morning of the eighth one should bathe in cold water, if possible in a stream, after anointing with oil. At the close of the fast the image is thrown into water, if of clay, etc., or returned to the image cupboard of the house if of metal, the spirit having been dismissed from it.

This festival is more popular in the North than the South.

Other Kṛishṇa festivals, besides that of his birthday, are kept, especially at Purī, the site of the famous temple to him under the name of Jagannātha. The largest and best known is :

(*a*) *Ratha yātrā*,[2] or Chariot fair. Āshāḍha śukla second. The preparation for this festival begins in the previous month with the bathing festival, known as the *Snāna yātrā*, on Jyeshṭha full moon, when the images of Jagannātha (Kṛishṇa), his brother, Balabhadra

[1] Sharmā, p. 148. [2] *F. & H.*, p. 68.

Balarāma, and sister, Subhadrā, are taken from the temple to a high platform outside, where they can be seen from the road. One hundred and eight pitchers of water from a special well, drawn only on this day, are brought and used in bathing the images before sunrise. This celebrates the descent of the Jagannātha image to earth.

The chariot procession celebrates the setting out of Kṛishṇa and Balarāma to Mathurā from Gokula, to kill their uncle, Kaṁsa. The three images mentioned above are taken in procession from the temple to the garden house, one and a half miles away. It is believed that whoever catches a glimpse of Jagannātha on the way will be saved from rebirths. Immense crowds attend, and the question of whether death beneath the wheels of the car is due to self-immolation or accident, is still an open one.

The images remain at the garden house until Āshāḍha śukla tenth, when the return procession (Punaryātrā or Uttararatha yātrā) takes place. Car processions are held at this time wherever there is a Jagannātha temple.

(*b*) *Swinging festivals*[1] are also held in honour of Kṛishṇa, in different parts of India, at different times. The *Hindola* or *Jhulāna yātrā* is held from Śrāvaṇa śukla eleventh to fifteenth in North India. A swinging platform is made for the occasion, and decorated with flowers and hangings. Every night Kṛishṇa and Rādhā are placed on it and swung, to dancing and singing of a special metre the "hindola." The object is to please Kṛishṇa, and therefore gain from him merit, wealth, and pleasure.

The *Pushpadola* is a swinging festival, held in Orissa, in the month Phālguna, coinciding with the Hoḷī festival in other parts of India.

(*c*) *Govinda dvādaśī*, on Phālguna śukla twelfth, celebrates Kṛishṇa's life as a cowherd. He is worshipped this day in Bengal under his name of Govinda.

[1] *F. & H.*, p. 37.

(*d*) *Govardhana pratipadā*, on Kārttika śukla first. (In Konkan on Āśvina kṛishṇa fourteenth.) On this day Kṛishṇa is believed to have held up the Govardhana mountain to protect the cowherds from Indra's wrath in the form of torrential rain. Hence he is worshipped, by the Vallabha sect, by their making on this day a large heap of rice, or cowdung, or vegetables, representing the mountain, in memory of him.

(*e*) *Rāsa yātrā*, from Kārttika śukla tenth to fifteenth. During these days his life with the herdswomen, or Gopīs, is celebrated.

(ix) *Buddhāvatāra*. Āśvinī śukla tenth. Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, which was originally a reform sect of Hinduism, has been given a place among the ten incarnations, as a great religious teacher, who could not be overlooked.

Hinduism did not, however, succeed in retaining Buddhism within its borders, and this incarnation day is wholly disregarded, and only noted in calendars.

(x) *Kalkyavatāra*. Śrāvaṇa śukla sixth. This incarnation, known also as Nishkalaṅkāvatāra (Stainless), is yet to come, although the month and day is already determined. In the Vana Parvan of the Mahābhārata the coming of Kalki is foretold as a time when righteousness shall be re-established, and men shall reform from the depravity of the present Kali age, giving way to a race which shall follow the laws of the Satya yuga.

"When sun and moon and Tishya (nakshatra Pushya) and Jupiter are in one mansion, the Kṛita age shall return."

Although this day is not celebrated, and not even always noted in calendars, there exists a real expectation of a coming incarnation who shall be a reformer of religion and society.

These two last avatāra are in the fourth, or Kali yuga, of the present world-age.

2. *The Ekādaśī days*, sometimes called *Haridini* (Hari's days). Besides the ten days appointed (but not all regarded) for worship of Vishṇu under the form of

his various incarnations, two days in every month, *viz.* the eleventh of each half, are appointed as strict fasts in his honour, preceded by a partial fast on the tenth, and followed by an all-night vigil. These fasts should be kept from a man's eighth to his eightieth year, *i.e.* during his whole life from initiation. Women may keep the fasts provided they do so with their father's or husband's consent.

Attention is directed, on each of these twenty-four days, to some reason why the fast should be kept, or to some benefit accruing from it, and failure to observe it is considered a sin. It has been suggested that, as Śaivism grew in strength and popularity, several days in each month being kept in honour of Śiva or of his wife Durgā, the Vaishṇavas, to strengthen their position, appointed these two days monthly for Vishṇu worship.

Professor Wilson[1] points out that the extravagant veneration in which the fast is held "demonstrates its sectarian character, and consequently its more modern origin." The Mahābhārata[2] notes the merit gained by fasting on the twelfth tithi, combined with Vishṇu worship, and the Vishṇu Purāṇa[3] gives both the eighth and the twelfth tithi as sacred to Vishṇu. The former day has now been dropped, and the eleventh has been substituted for the twelfth.

The popular idea as to the origin is as follows:—Śiva,[4] being propitiated by the worship of a demon, Mṛidumānya, promised him invincibility in battle and immunity from death except at the hands of a woman not born of woman. Whereupon Mṛidumānya began to harass the gods, who appealed to Vishṇu, Śiva and Brahmā for help. The three retired to a cave on a mountain, where, through fasts and meditation, they hoped to devise a means of helping without breaking Śiva's oath.

As rain was falling at the time, their fast was also accompanied by an involuntary bath. Crowded as they

[1] *Miscellaneous Essays*, p. 29.
[2] Anuśāsana Parva.
[3] Wilson's trans., I, xx, 67.
[4] Sharmā, p. 100, etc.

were in the cave, from their breath was produced a woman, who joined battle with the demon and slew him. The grateful immortals worshipped her and inquired her name, which she gave as Ekādaśī ([the spirit of] the eleventh), saying that everyone who bathed and fasted on all eleventh tithi should be delivered from sin and sorrow. This institution dates from Purāṇic times.

The eleventh day of the light halves of Āshāḍha and Kārttika (the beginning and end of the four months' rainy season) are especially important, being known as Mahaikādaśī (great elevenths).

On the eleventh of Āshāḍha, Vishṇu is believed to retire below the ocean for his four months' sleep, and on the eleventh of Kārttika to awake and return.

The whole twenty-four days are very generally kept throughout Mahārāshṭra, where — the barrier between Vaishṇava and Śaiva being very slight—followers of Śiva are not uncommonly found to be keeping the same fast in his honour.

The names of the twenty-four Ekādaśī days, and the legends attaching to them, are as under:

*Chaitra light half.*[1] *Kāmadaikādaśī* (Wish-granting eleventh). Lalita Gandharva was changed by his Nāga lord into a demon, for failing to sing properly. His wife, Lalitā, learned from a sage that by propitiating Vishṇu by fasting on Chaitra śukla eleventh, she could acquire such merit as, being transferred to her husband, would effect his release. She observed it and gained her desire.

*Chaitra dark half. Varūthinyekādaśi* (Equipped [with merit] eleventh). Whoever will keep the fast of this day, will gain as much merit as the gift of a thousand cows would procure; *i.e.* he is fully equipped with sufficient merit to balance all possible sins.

*Vaiśākha light half. Mohinyekādaśī* (Temptation eleventh). Dhṛishṭabuddhi, son of Dhanapāla Vaiśya,

[1] This section chiefly from the एकादशी महात्म्यम् and *Hindu Year.*

squandered all his money on evil living. He was turned out of doors by his father and finally banished by the king. Wandering desolate in a forest, he found a sage who showed him how, by observing this fast, to become free from his former temptations and regain his lost wealth.

*Vaiśākha dark half. Aparaikādaśī* (Unequalled eleventh). The merit which can be gained by keeping this fast is equal to all that can come from purificatory bathing and giving of alms. Hence it is unequalled in value.

*Jyeshṭha light half. Nirjalaikādaśī* (Waterless eleventh). Bhīmasena, one of the five Pāṇḍava brothers, was a great eater, and found it impossible to keep the ekādaśī fasts. The sage Vyāsa told him for his comfort that if he would keep this single fast once, rigidly abstaining even from water, either for drinking or bathing, he could gain as much merit as by observing the whole twenty-four. He is reported to have fasted only this once in all his life, in order to gain success in the battle against the Kauravas.

*Jyeshṭha dark half. Yoginyekādaśī* (Austere eleventh). Kubera, lord of wealth, and devotee of Śiva, had a gardener whose duty was to supply him with flowers for his worship. One day, the flowers not being forthcoming, Kubera found his gardener neglecting his work in order to spend time with his beautiful wife. For this fault the wretched man was cursed to become a leper. After much suffering, he learnt from a sage the merit obtainable by keeping this fast, and through practising austerities on this day he was freed from the curse.

*Āshāḍha light half. Śāyinyekādaśī* (Sleeping eleventh). In King Māghāta's reign a severe famine came on the earth, no rain having fallen for three years. The king and all his subjects gathered together and asked advice from a sage. He advised them to keep this day's fast, praying for Vishṇu's help. As a result of following this advice, heavy rain fell and the famine was over.

This day celebrates Vishṇu's retiring beneath the ocean for his four months' sleep, and is one of the two great ekādaśī, which must be observed by all Vaishṇavas as follows. A strict fast must be kept from noon on the tenth until the early morning, before sunrise, on the twelfth. Both intervening nights should be spent in meditating on Vishṇu and singing his praises. Early on the eleventh one should bathe, if possible in a sacred river, and worship some form of Vishṇu. In the evening an image of Vishṇu must be worshipped with flowers and water, with mantras, and then arranged in a recumbent position, as if for sleep. Presents, according to one's ability, must be given to Brāhmans.

*Āshāḍha dark half. Kāmikaikādaśī* (Wish-granting eleventh). If anyone, having a great desire unfulfilled, will observe this day's fast, keeping the desire constantly in mind, the merit obtained will be sufficient to grant the desire.

*Śrāvaṇa light half. Putradaikādaśī* (Son-giving eleventh). King Mahījit was sonless, and consequently he, his wife, and his subjects were much distressed. They all went to consult a sage who, by most rigorous austerities, had come to know past, present and future. He told them that the lack of a son was due to the king, in his former birth as a Vaiśya merchant, having once drunk water on a Jyeshṭha śukla twelfth. This demerit could, however, be cancelled if in the present birth he fasted on Śrāvaṇa śukla eleventh. He did so, and a son was born.

*Note.*—This points to the transition from the twelfth to the eleventh day, and also suggests that the twenty-four days were not instituted simultaneously as fasts. The Jyeshṭha fast was older than the Śrāvaṇa one.

*Śrāvaṇa dark half. Ajaikādaśī* (Illusion eleventh). This deals with the well-known story of King Hariśchandra, who fell upon evil days, lost his wife and son and kingdom, and was condemned to wash the burial clothes of corpses at the burning ghāt. In depression and despair, he was meditating suicide when Gautama found him, and told him of the merit obtain-

able by keeping this fast. Following Gautama's advice, he overcame his ill fate, finally regaining wife, son and happiness.

*Bhādrapada light half. Parivartinyekādaśī* (Turning eleventh). Vishṇu, after two months' sleep, turns from one side to the other, and continues his slumbers. He is worshipped at sunset, his image being turned from lying on the left to the right side. The observances for this day merge into those of Vāmana dvādaśī (see p. 77).

*Bhādrapada dark half. Indraikādaśī* (Indra's eleventh). King Indrasena was a devotee of Vishṇu. One day the sage Nārada appeared, bearing a message from Indrasena's father in Yamaloka (*i.e.* in the first abode of the dead after death, not necessarily a place of suffering). The message was to the effect that, though not unhappy, he wished to go on to greater happiness in Svarga (*i.e.* Indra's heaven), which could be managed through his son Indrasena's help. Nārada proceeded to say that, by the king's keeping a fast on this day, bathing at dawn and at noon, and watching at night, Vishṇu would be sufficiently propitiated to grant merit sufficient to effect the desired transfer. King and subjects kept the fast, with the wished-for result.

*Āśvina light half. Pāsāṅkuśaikādaśī* (Noose and goad eleventh). Yama, lord of the departed, comes to fetch the dying with a noose and goad to snare their spirits. But whoever will keep this fast will be enabled to escape him and proceed straight to Indra's heaven.

*Āśvina dark half. Ramaikādaśī* (Joyful eleventh). Śobhana, the son-in-law of King Muchukunda, at his wife Chandrabhāgā's wish, abstained from food and water on this day, in spite of much suffering, and attained to great joy in Svarga.

*Kārttika light half. Prabodhinyekādaśī* (Awaking eleventh). This day marks the end of Vishṇu's four months' sleep, and is the second of the two great ekādaśī. The celebrations are closely connected with those of the Tulasī marriage on the following day (p. 129), and are not completed until then, but a

special custom is practised in Mahārāshṭra, called the Āvalībhojana or Vanabhojana (picnic under an Āvalī tree or in a wood). The Āvalī or Emblica myrobalan is sacred to Vishṇu. On this day, or any day between the tenth and the fifteenth, the members of a family, and friends, will assemble, and go (sometimes with music), to an Āvalī tree, possibly in a grove outside the town or village. Arrived there, they sprinkle the roots with water, wind a thread about it, and worship it with mantras and circumambulation. After this, they sit under it for a picnic meal, and return home in the evening.

This is a popular festival among women and children. Those who have laid their Vishṇu image to rest, restore it to-day to an upright position. The image from some temples is carried to a tank or river and invoked to awake. It is then carried back with rejoicings.

This day marks the end of the rainy season, and the return to a more open-air life.

*Kārttika dark half. Utpattyekādaśī* (Creation-celebrating eleventh). The legend attaching to this day is so similar to that given in explanation of the institution of the ekādaśī fasts, that it suggests a common origin. Vishṇu created a female manifestation of himself, in order to slay the demon Mura, and gave her as a boon the honour of becoming the guardian spirit of the elevenths, saying that whoever would serve her, *i.e.* fast on the day bearing her name, should have his favour.

*Mārgaśīrsha light half. Mokshadaikādaśī* (Release-giving eleventh. King Vaikhānasa dreamed that his father was in Naraka (hell), beseeching his son to release him. The king consulted some sages, who confirmed the story of his father's present suffering as a result of evil done during his lifetime. They advised the king and his subjects to observe a fast on this day, and use the accumulated merit obtained to release the former king from his present state. This was accomplished successfully.

*Mārgaśīrsha dark half. Saphalaikādaśī* (Fruitful eleventh). Lumpaka, the ne'er-do-well son of King Māhishmat, was banished from court and took up his abode in a forest. Becoming exhausted one day, he was unable to rise to procure food or water, and so kept an involuntary fast. He found some fruit, but, being unable to eat it, he laid it at the foot of a pippal tree, *i.e.* he made an offering to Vishṇu. The day happened to be Mārgaśīrsha kṛishṇa eleventh, and all unknowingly he had kept the law. Therefore Vishṇu accepted him, his sufferings became fruitful, and he attained to Svarga.

*Pausha light half. Putradaikādaśī* (Son-giving eleventh). Similar to the Śrāvaṇa śukla eleventh legend, is the one connected with this day. King Suketu, virtuous though sonless, observed this fast, and was, in consequence, blessed with a son.

*Pausha dark half. Shaṭtilaikādaśī* (Six Sesamum eleventh). On this day sesamum should be used in six ways, *viz.* (i) thrown into water used for bathing, (ii) pounded and rubbed on the body, (iii) eaten (six only), (iv) thrown into one's drinking water, (v) given as alms to Brāhmans, (vi) sacrificed to the gods.

The Brahmā Purāṇa says that Yama created sesamum seeds this day, after a long penance, to obtain purification for sin.

*Māgha light half. Jayaikādaśī* (Triumphant eleventh). At Indra's court a Gandharva (semi-divine singer), Pushpavān, failed to please him by his dancing and singing, as most of his attention was directed to his wife, Pushpavatī. Indra became so angry with them both that he condemned them to roam as demons in the under-world. There they endured great sufferings, and were unable, one Māgha śukla eleventh to take any food, being much exhausted. Vishṇu accepted their fast, and delivered them from the curse. Indra met them as they rose triumphantly to heaven, but had no power to enforce his curse against Vishṇu's blessing.

*Note.*—Here is interesting evidence of the supercession of Indra by Vishṇu. The power of the latter had become greater than that of the former when the above legend was established.

*Māgha dark half. Vijayaikādaśī* (Victorious eleventh). When Rāma gained the news that his lost wife, Sītā, was in Laṅkā, he set off to rescue her, but reaching the sea could find no means of getting across. He took advice and was told to keep this day's fast, by which he gained the power of effecting a crossing.

*Phālguna light half. Āmalakyekādaśī* (Āmalakī eleventh). King Chaitraratha once kept a fast and worshipped Paraśurāma under an Āmalakī or Āvalī tree. This being on this day was added to his list of merit.

*Phālguna dark half. Pāpamochanyekādaśī* (Sin-freeing eleventh). A beautiful Apsarā, Mañjughosha, in Kubera's garden, once distracted the thoughts of the sage Medhāvī from his devotions by her beautiful singing. For this he cursed her. She was freed from the curse, and from the sin of which it was the cause, by keeping this fast.

## II. Siva Festivals

We now come to the days dedicated to Siva. He is the post-Vedic development of the Rudra of the Ṛigveda,[1] and has many of Rudra's attributes, *e.g.* he is associated with mountains, is blue-throated, clothed in a skin, has a fierce and terrible side to his nature, etc. Rudra was the storm-god, and the blue throat probably refers to the blue-black thunder cloud of the advancing storm. In the Śiva legends it becomes the result of drinking the poison, churned from the milky ocean, which otherwise would have destroyed the human race. He is considered both the Creator and Destroyer of men, and is a god to be feared. He is known under various names, the chief being Śaṅkara, Śambhu and Mahādeva.

He is believed to have appeared on earth in man's form from time to time, his best-known manifestation being that of Kāla Bhairava (q.v., p. 96). But there is no such well-defined or well-developed theory of

[1] Vedic Mythology, *E.I.A.R.*, pp. 4, 74, etc.; Bhandārkar, p. 155.

successive incarnations as in the case of Vishṇu. Villagers will, not infrequently, describe a local deity, perhaps unknown throughout the rest of India, as "Mahādeva's avatāra."

There seems to have been a certain amount of rivalry between worshippers of Vishṇu and Śiva in early days, although Hopkins[1] believes the earlier passages of the Mahābhārata show that at first they were not very antagonistic; but in later times a great spirit of enmity grew up between the two sects, each trying to establish precedence over the other; and occasionally, even to-day, feeling runs high, although the tendency now is towards greater amity.

Dr. Farquhar[2] draws attention to an interesting sect, the Bhāgavatas, who worshipped both gods, insisting on their equality. Inscriptions show that the sect existed in the first half of the sixth century A.D., and members of it are still to be found in South India. Traces of this Harihara worship are noted in Chap. VIII (pp. 152, 159, 160).

Although pictures and images of Śiva are not uncommon, yet they are practically never used for worship. All his temples and shrines contain instead his emblem, the Liṅga, and almost invariably the image of a bull is found outside the shrine, and is venerated only less than the emblem itself. The bull is regarded as the symbol, above all others, of generative power, hence his association with Śiva.

Bhandārkar[3] believes the use of the liṅga, as an emblem of Śiva, was introduced after the Āryan immigration into India, being taken from aboriginal worship. Gradually becoming adopted by the lower castes, who were in closer touch with the aboriginal tribes, it became finally accepted by all classes as the emblem of Śiva. The earlier passages in the Mahābhārata[4] do not refer to Śiva as a phallic god, but in

[1] Epic Mythology, *E.I.A.R.*, p. 221.
[2] *Outline of Religious Literature of India*, p. 142 ff.
[3] Bhandārkar, *E.I.A.R.*, p. 115.
[4] Epic Mythology, *E.I.A.R.*, p. 221.

later passages he is said to be pleased with the offering of phallic worship.

The special Śiva days are :

1. *The thirteenth tithi of each half-month.*[1] The light half thirteenth is called Pradosha (late evening). The evening is sacred to Śiva, who is worshipped at sunset. A fast must be kept until the stars appear. The dark half thirteenth is called Śivarātri (Śiva's night), and the same rule applies as to Pradosha. Both are observed throughout Mahārāshṭra. They correspond to Vishṇu's ekādaśī days.

The Śivarātri of Māgha is the chief day in the year for his worship. It is called *Mahāśivarātri* (the great night of Śiva).

The legend attached to it is very popular, as follows: A hunter,[2] a man of bad character, going out to hunt one day, which happened to be Māgha kṛishṇa thirteenth, passed a Śiva temple, and saw a number of people worshipping the liṅga, singing, calling out "Śiva, Siva," etc. Mockingly the hunter imitated their cries, and without his knowledge, or desire, the very utterance of the god's name on that holy day removed some of his sins. He killed nothing that day, and had to keep an involuntary fast. As night came on, through fear of wild beasts, he climbed into a tree, which happened to be a bel tree (the wood-apple, sacred to Śiva), but was unable to sleep, owing to the cold; thus keeping an involuntary vigil. Not only so, but shivering and shaking, he dislodged a number of bel leaves, which fell, together with moisture, from the tree, on to a stone Śiva liṅga beneath, *i.e.* he involuntarily offered bel leaves and cool water to the god. The cumulative merit of all these involuntary acts not only released him from past sins, but caused his reception into Śiva's abode of Kailāsa.

This legend, while not offering any solution of the origin of the fast and worship, which was already

[1] *Hindu Year*, p. 607.
[2] Skanda Purāṇa and Śiva Purāṇa

accepted as established, furnishes very substantial reasons why it should be persisted in, and is always quoted to show the very real and great benefits accruing to the man who keeps it.

To keep this Śivarātri[1] properly, a fast must be observed for a complete tithi, not during the day only, as in the ordinary Śivarātris ; and at every third hour during the night the liṅga must be worshipped, with offerings of ketakī flowers and bel leaves, and bathed in succession with milk, curds, ghī and honey. On the morning of the fourteenth one must bathe, after anointing with sesamum oil, worship the liṅga with mantras and with recitations of Śiva's thousand names and offerings of one thousand or one hundred and eight bel leaves. Afterwards the fast may be broken.

Fairs are held at this festival at the twelve great liṅga temples of India. Lists vary, but the following are usually given :[2]

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| i. | Rāmeśvara | (near Cape Comorin). |
| ii. | Mahākāla | (Ujjain). |
| iii. | Kedaranātha | (Gharval). |
| iv. | Viśvanātha | (Benāres). |
| v. | Oṁkāranātha | (on river Narmadā). |
| vi. | Vaidyānātha | (Bengal). |
| vii. | Bhīmaśaṅkara | (source of river Bhīma, near Poona). |
| viii. | Somanātha | (Kāthiāvār). |
| ix. | Tryambaka | (source of river Godāvarī, near Nāsik). |
| x. | Mallikārjuna | (Karnatic). |
| xi. | Nāganātha | (Nizām's Territory). |
| xii. | Dhṛishmeśvara | |

2. Each *Monday* is devoted to Śiva worship by the orthodox. Women desiring children sometimes fast every Monday for a year.

3. *The eighth tithi of each half* is indirectly dedicated to Śiva, in that the light half eighth is Durgāshṭamī (Durgā's eighth), she being Śiva's wife, and the dark half eighth is Kālāshṭamī (Kāla's eighth), Kāla or Kāla Bhairava being a manifestation of Śiva.

[1] *F. & H.*, p. 75 ; Sharmā, p. 262.

[2] So Molesworth and *E.R.E.*, X, p. 24; *F. & H.* differs slightly, giving only 10.

4. In the same way *the fourth tithi of each half* is indirectly dedicated to Śiva, being days for propitiating his son Gaṇeśa. The light and dark fourths being called, respectively, Vināyakī and Saṁkashṭa chaturthī. The latter, especially, is regarded as a day for foreboding evil, an unlucky day.

Bhandārkar[1] considers Gaṇeśa worshippers a Śaiva sect, established very late, between the fifth and eighth centuries A.D. But the god of the fourth tithi, although now identified with Gaṇeśa of the elephant head, seems to have had originally a connection with the moon, as these were moon worship days. Is it possible that, on account of the feud between Gaṇeśa and the moon no one dare worship the latter without also propitiating the former, who is known to be malicious?

5. *Skanda or Kārttikeya*, the patron of war, another son of Śiva, is worshipped on Kārttika śukla fifth, or new moon. He[2] was extensively worshipped in ancient times. Now we find him but rarely mentioned. His day is observed in Bengal, where a twenty-four hours' fast is kept, and he is worshipped at each of the four night watches; but his cult is chiefly to be met with in the South.

6. *Tripurī pūrṇimā*. Kārttika full moon. This day is, next to Mahāśivarātri, the greatest day in the year for Śiva worship. The legend attached to it has various forms, the earliest of which seems to be that in the Mahābhārata[3] which says there were three demons, lords of three cities, of gold, silver and iron, respectively, who united in harassing the gods. The gods appealed to Rudra, who defeated the demons and burnt their cities. The popular account is that there was but one demon, Tripurī, lord of three cities of gold (heaven), silver (earth), and iron (hell), whose ruler he had become through the power of his austerities, and whose inhabitants he tormented.

[1] Bhandārkar, *E.I.A.R.*, p. 147.
[2] ,, ,, ,, ,, p. 150.
[3] Droṇa Parva.

Neither Brahmā nor Vishṇu was strong enough to overcome him, but Śiva eventually, after three days' fight, killed him on the full moon of Kārttika, which was thereupon instituted as a day of triumph.

One should bathe this day, if possible in the Gaṅgā, and give presents of lamps to Brāhmans. At sunset lamps are lighted and placed in all Śiva temples, and in the houses of all who keep this festival. Prayers are made, chiefly by women, before the lamps, which are kept burning all night. The day is sometimes called Kārttika Dīparatna (The jewelled lamp of Kārttika).

*Note.*—A sacrifice, known as Śākamedhāḥ, was performed in ancient times, on Kārttika full moon, in order to gain victory over enemies, and may have been the origin of this festival.

7. *Maunya vrata* (silent worship) is paid to Śiva on Bhādrapada śukla first. Men alone perform the worship, in silence, but the whole family remains silent throughout meals, and the women when cooking.

8. *Ghaṇṭākarṇa pūjā*, on Phālguna kṛishṇa fifteenth, is allied to Śiva worship. This is a Bengal festival. Ghaṇṭākarṇa, one of the attendants on Śiva, is worshipped under the form of a water-jar, with fruit and flowers. This is believed to be a prevention of disease.

9. *Kāla Bhairava* is worshipped, as a manifestation of Śiva, on every dark eighth, and particularly on the dark eighth of Kārttika. Some class him among the pre-Āryan gods,[1] Crooke identifying him with Kshetrapāla (Protector of fields), which hardly seems compatible with his fierce, terrible nature. He is believed to be black, riding by night on a black horse, accompanied by a black dog. His chief temple is at Benāres, and those of his devotees who die there are believed to undergo expiatory punishment, known as Bhairavī yātanā, and then proceed immediately to final bliss; such are known as Rudra piśācha (Rudra's spirits). Other men, on dying, fall into Yama's hands, and have to return to the earth in successive births.

[1] *Bom. Gaz.*, XVIII, p. 289; Dravidians, *E.R.E.*, V, p. 1.

Three festivals now remain under the Vishṇu-Śiva head, of which two are in honour of both gods, and the third in honour of the Triad.

1. *Vaikuṇṭha chaturdaśī.* Kārttika śukla fourteenth. The legend attached to this day is that in the Kṛishṇa incarnation, Vishṇu went to Kāśī (Benāres), to bathe in the Maṇikarṇikā pool, and to worship Viśveśvara by the offering of one thousand lotus flowers. Śiva secretly stole one of the flowers, and Kṛishṇa, unable to find it, or procure another, and unwilling to leave his worship incomplete, took one of his own eyes to replace the lost lotus and finished his worship. This devotion so pleased Śiva, that he appointed this day to be observed by all, worshipping Vishṇu and bathing in the Maṇikarṇikā pool in the morning, and himself in the evening. Those who worship Vishṇu will attain to his heaven, *i.e.* Vaikuṇṭha.

Hence it is a day when both sects worship both gods, a large pilgrimage attended by many taking place in the sacred pool in Benāres.

2. *Harihara yātrā.* Kārttika full moon. Hari = Vishṇu, and Hara = Śiva. The Hariharanātha temple at Sonepur, at the junction of the Gandakī with the Gaṅgā, is one of the oldest temples in India, said to have been built by Rāma on his way to win his bride. At this festival many pilgrims assemble for bathing and worshipping both great gods.

3. *Dattātreya pūrṇimā.* Mārgaśīrsha full moon. The birth of this god is recorded as follows:

Vishṇu,[1] Śiva and Brahmā determined to test the virtue of Anusūyā, wife of the Ṛishi Atri, went to her house during her husband's absence, as mendicants, and demanded a meal. When she brought it they imposed impossible conditions on her as the price of their eating it, saying that if she refused to comply they would starve, and the guilt of murder would lie upon her. The poor woman felt that the laws of hospitality compelled her to comply, but the power of her

[1] Sharmā, p. 246.

virtue was such that at the moment of her appearance before them they were changed into three infants. On Atri's return she told him the whole story, and his wisdom discerned in the babies the three gods of the triad.

At his prayer they appeared in their original forms, and declared themselves satisfied alike with his devotion and his wife's virtue, granting as a reward the gift of the three babies to the childless couple. The Brahmā baby was named Chandra, but soon left them to go and live in the moon; the Śiva baby was named Durvāsa, and left home to lead a wandering pilgrim's life. The third baby, Vishṇu, was named Dattātreya,[1] and became the representative of the three.

Some say that as only the Vishṇu third of the triad, remained in Dattātreya, he cannot rightly be regarded as representing the three, but the usual practice is to fast on this day, and to worship Dattātreya in the evening, as representing the three great gods in his own person.

Worshippers may belong to any caste or sect. His temples are few and he is not much known outside Western India. Monier Williams[2] believes the story to have become attached to a holy Brāhman living about the tenth century A.D., who became deified after his death. Various tales about him are current, *e.g.* he became a mendicant, travelling daily to Benāres for his morning ablutions, to Kolhāpūr for his afternoon food-begging, and to the Sahyādri range for his rest at night. Hence two Marāṭhī proverbs have arisen: दत्तात्रेयाची फेरी ("Dattātreya's pilgrimage"), meaning the movements of a person who is constantly travelling; and दत्त करून येणें ("To come, having played Dattātreya"), meaning to appear in time to profit by the fruits of others' labours.

[1] Adopted son of Atri.
[2] *Religious Thought and Life in India*, p. 267.

# CHAPTER VI

## ON FESTIVALS ARISING FROM ANIMISTIC SOURCES

A good deal of the worship in modern India is traceable to very ancient pre-Āryan sources, or, where not actually traceable, the reasons for believing it originated in Nature or Animistic worship are sufficiently strong for considering it a survival of animism.

In this chapter such worship is dealt with under four heads:

(1) Goddess and tutelary deity worship; (2) Spirit worship; (3) Animal worship; and (4) Worship of plants and inanimate things.

### I. Goddess and Tutelary Deity Worship

Lecturing before the British Association in 1919, Dr. Crooke spoke of the widespread "mother" cults in India, *viz.* Mother Earth (with which snake worship is closely connected; see p. 121), the Jungle Mothers, Deified Women, and Elemental Deities. Most of the modern Hindu goddesses seemed to have originated from these primitive deities of the aboriginal inhabitants of India.

And we find to-day that all over India some "mother" is the tutelary deity of the village. Some of these, as the Mariāī, Jokhāī, etc., of Mahārāshṭra, are still worshipped locally under their ancient names; some of them, as far back as the Epic Period, became identified with the wives of the greater gods, and much of the Lakshmī, Durgā, etc., worship of to-day is derived from the worship formerly offered to some "mother."

Major West[1] identifies the present-day Mahālakshmī, worshipped at Kolhāpūr under the name of Ambābāī, with a pre-Āryan goddess.

In Vedic times the wives of the gods were of but slight importance, and in the Ṛigveda[2] were not objects of worship, but towards the end of that period, as the immigrant Āryans became better acquainted with the aboriginal goddesses of the country, they increased in popularity. Hermann Jacobi[3] dates the identification of the Bengal mother goddess with Durgā, wife of Rudra-Śiva, at the end of the Vedic period. And Yudhisthira's song of praise to her, in the Mahābhārata,[4] calling her also Kālī, the slayer of the buffalo demon, shows that she had won her place as Śiva's wife at the time when that was composed. By deriving the name Kālī from Kāla (time), Brennand[5] believes her to have been originally the goddess of Time, the Insatiable, the Devastator of countries, and the Bringer of famines, wars and pestilence.

Again, Sītā, wife of Rāma, who was born of a furrow, is said by Jacobi[6] to have (apparently) been "a chthonic deity before she became an epic heroine," and she only finally became regarded as an incarnation of Lakshmī, because her husband Rāma had become so of Vishṇu.

To come now to the actual festivals held in honour of these "mothers" and other goddesses.

(i) *Gaurī tritīyā.* Chaitra śukla third to Vaiśākha śukla third. Gaurī, the giver of harvest, has been already mentioned in a previous chapter (p. 50), but this festival celebrates her as the patron goddess of women, who alone observe it. She is believed to spend a month now at her parents' home. (See Chap. III, p. 65.)

[1] *I.A.*, X, p. 245.
[2] Monier Williams, *Religious Life and Thought*, p. 14.
[3] Durgā, *E.R.E.*, V, p. 119.
[4] Virāta Parva.
[5] *Hindu Astronomy*, p. 140.
[6] Incarnation, *E.R.E.*, VII, p. 194.

These two aspects of Gaurī indicate two former deities, both of whom have come to be identified with Śiva's wife.

The feast is commonly kept among Mahārāshṭra Brāhman women. It is less observed in the North, and unknown in Bengal. On the third, or some following day, the unwidowed women of any household clean the house, bathe, and erect in the best room a platform, or a series of platforms, in pyramidal form, at the top of which is placed an image of Gaurī, while on the tiers below her are gathered all the ornaments the house contains, such as images of other deities, pictures, religious or secular, shells, even English dolls and cheap china. Invitations are sent to neighbours, who on their arrival receive a present of turmeric, fruit, flowers, etc., and the red lead mark of happiness is made on their foreheads, and scented oil is rubbed on their hands.

No worship is at this time performed, the function is purely social, but at night prayers for an unwidowed life are offered before the platform, also sometimes there is singing and dancing.

Gaurī, again, is worshipped every Tuesday in Śrāvaṇa, by girls, for five successive years after marriage. The girl bathes at dawn, and then proceeds to worship her Gaurī image with flowers, fruit, scent, and holy grass, with mantras, to preserve the life of her husband, *i.e.* to preserve her own happiness as an unwidowed woman till death. She also gives cocoanuts and toilet articles to her mother (if unwidowed), and she must fast all day and keep a vigil all the following night.

(ii) *Daśaharā* or *Gaṅgotsava.*[1] Jyeshṭha śukla first to tenth. The "Destroyer of ten," or Gaṅgā festival, if observed according to rule, will destroy the ten chief sins of the one who observes it. These ten are: Harsh speech, false speech, slander, clamour, theft, injury, adultery, covetousness, evil thoughts, foolish obstinacy. (This festival, through similarity of sound, is often

[1] *Hindu Year*, p. 12; Sharmā, p. 57.

confused with the Dasarā. The two are quite distinct, and should not be so confused.)

The observance consists chiefly of bathing at dawn, on each of the ten days, if possible in the Gaṅgā, but otherwise in some other sacred river, such as the Kṛishṇa, Venī, Godāvarī, Narmadā, etc. At the time of bathing mantras must be said, and the bather, standing up to the waist in water, must dip ten times. Those who can afford it are also expected to worship a gold or silver image of Gaṅgā, also to give ten measures of grain and ten cows to ten Brāhmans, and feast them and their wives.

Some people make flour images of river-dwellers, fish, frogs, crocodiles, etc., also of geese and crane, and send them floating down the river. It is unmistakably an ancient festival to the river goddess, and takes place immediately before the rainy season, when it is hoped she will be replenished. The favourite places of pilgrimage are Hardvāra and Prayāga (Allāhābād).

The legend[1] purporting to explain the festival is that one, Sagara, had performed so many horse sacrifices to Vishṇu, and had gained so much merit thereby, that the performance of a single one more would have made him dangerously powerful. Indra, therefore, stole the horse prepared for the next sacrifice, to prevent its being performed. In searching for the horse, one of Sagara's 60,000 sons falsely accused the sage Kapila of having stolen it. The sage in anger sent fire out of his eyes and burnt them all to ashes. Later, repenting, he said they could be restored to life by Gaṅgā water falling on them.

For two generations Sagara's descendants worshipped Gaṅgā, until in the third generation she became appeased by the prayers of Bhagīratha, and consented to descend to the earth from her dwelling in the Himālaya mountains. And, lest her fall should rend the earth, Rudra-Śaṅkara received her on his head, from which, after ten days, she descended to earth, passing Hardvāra,

[1] Mahābhārata, Vana Parva and Rāmāyaṇa.

Prayāga, and other places, and making them holy. As she reached the spot where the ashes of Sagara's sons were lying (the mouth of the Ganges), they immediately received life.

This festival is exceptional, in that if it occurs in a a year with an Adhika Jyeshṭha month, it is to be held in the Adhika, not in the normal, Jyeshṭha month. (See Chap. I, p. 20.)

(iii) *Vāruṇī.* Chaitra kṛishṇa thirteenth, or Phālguna kṛishṇa thirteenth. This is another Gaṅgā bathing festival, to be observed, in order to acquire merit, when the moon enters the Śatatārakā nakshatra. If the Gaṅgā is not available, another sacred river may be substituted.

(iv) *Brahmaputra snāna.* Chaitra śukla eighth. A similar bathing festival[1] is held in connection with the Brahmaputra river. It is held all along the north bank, especially at Nāṅgālbāndha in Dacca. The story goes that Paraśurāma (see p. 78) bathed in this river, to cleanse himself from the sin of killing his mother, Reṇukā, and then cut a way for it to flow through the mountains. But it united with the river Śītalākshyā, which aroused his anger, and he took away its holiness except for this one day of the year. The spirit of this river is male, which is very unusual.

(v) *Sītā Navamī.*[2] Vaiśākha śukla ninth. This festival is very little observed, which is strange, seeing that Sītā is the most popular heroine in India. The day is kept in Bengal, and as she is by tradition born of the earth, her worship on this day is productive of equal merit with the giving away of land in charity.

(vi) *Shashṭhī Devī.* Shashṭhī (the sixth) is considered a malevolent female deity, who injures new-born infants and their mothers, unless propitiated, about the sixth day after a birth. Now, the incidence of puerpural fever in the mother, or of tetanus in either mother or child—and both diseases are very common in India—occurs about the sixth day after a

[1] *F. & H.*, p. 11. [2] *F. & H.*, p. 73.

birth. There can be, therefore, little doubt of the origin of the dreaded goddess.

She is always propitiated with gifts and prayers by all women and their female friends after the birth of a child, but certain days are set apart as well, varying in different parts of India, but always on a sixth tithi, for her special worship, *viz.*

(*a*) *Aśoka shashṭhī*[1] (Sorrow-free sixth). Chaitra śukla sixth. Northern India. The goddess is invoked to ensure the well-being of children. Women drink water in which six flower-buds of the aśoka tree have been steeped.

The legend[2] says that a certain sage found an infant at his door, whom he adopted and brought up. At her marriage to a prince, he gave her some aśoka seeds, telling her to scatter them on the ground as she went to her husband's house, and an avenue of trees would grow up, down which she could come to find him, if at any time she needed help. Later on, disaster befell her family: one morning all the sons and their wives were found dead. The queen remembered the promise, and fled down the aśoka avenue, at the end of which she found the sage, who gave her some holy water, which, being sprinkled on the dead bodies, restored them all to life.

(*b*) *Araṇya shashṭhī*[3] (Forest sixth). Jyeshṭha śukla sixth. Bengal and South India. Women walk in the woods to-day, eating only fruit, and taking fans and other offerings to a Shashṭhī shrine, in the hope of having strong and beautiful children.

(*c*) *Shashṭhī.* Jyeshṭha śukla sixth. Western India. The legend[4] runs that a woman stole food in her father-in-law's house, and blamed the cat, who, in revenge, carried off all her children as soon as they were born, to Shashṭhī. The woman appealed to the goddess for mercy, and was told to make an image of the cat, with

[1] *F. & H.*, p. 7.
[2] Gupte, p. 211.
[3] *Lunar Year*, p. 283; *F. & H.*, p. 70.
[4] Gupte, p. 212.

rice-flour and water and a charm of thread. The cat and the goddess were to be worshipped, and the charm bound on the child's wrist, and it would be safe. She must eat only fruit and drink only milk on the day of worship.

A black cat is always associated with Shashṭhī, and must never be beaten.

(*d*) *Khas shashṭhī*. Pausha śukla sixth. A fast is kept on this day, followed by worship of the goddess who is so much feared, in order to preserve the life of children.

(vii) *Śītalā Devī* (The cool one). This is another disease goddess, particularly associated with small-pox, and her images and shrines are among the commonest in India. Whether through a similar mental process to that which led to naming the unlucky planet Mars, "The lucky one" (see Chap. II, p. 33), or some other cause, her name stands in contrast to the burning fever she brings to her victims. During small-pox epidemics she is propitiated by anxious mothers, but, as in the case of Shashṭhī (with whom she is occasionally identified), there are special days appointed for her worship, *i.e.*

(*a*) *Śītalā shashṭhī*, on Māgha śukla sixth, in Bengal.

(*b*) *Śītalā saptamī*, on Śrāvaṇa kṛishṇa seventh, in Gujarāt.

(*c*) *Śītalāshṭamī*, on Phālguna kṛishṇa eighth, in Northern India.

(*d*) And a big fair to her, on Vaiśākha full moon, at Kelve, Thāna district (Bombay).

Her worship is unusual in one particular. She will accept the prayers and offerings of widows, if mothers, on behalf of their children. During the day of her worship one must abstain from all hot, or cooked, food and drink. One reason given for this is that she comes and rolls on the hearth, and must not get burned, so that no cooking can be done. The real reason is more likely to be the longing for cold water on the part of small-pox patients.

(viii) *Worship of Female Energy under differing names.* The worship of woman, as such, is general all

over India, degenerating sometimes, as in the Rādhā worshipping Vallabhāchārya sect into obscene rites, but under other conditions less objectionable. A number of minor festivals, and some of more importance, can be gathered together under this heading, *i.e.*

(*a*) *Rambhā tritīyā.* Jyeshṭha śukla third. Northern India. This goddess was the beautiful woman who, like Lakshmī, was produced at the churning of the milk ocean. She is worshipped in Northern India by women on this day.

(*b*) *Rādhāshṭamī.*[1] Bhādrapada śukla eighth. Bengal. Rādhā, the favourite mistress of Kṛishṇa, is worshipped by men on this day as the Ichchhā śaktī (Energy of desire). It is believed that to worship her with flowers, fruit, and jewels, at noon, fasting, is pleasing to Kṛishṇa. Esoteric explanations of her name and history are given.

(*c*) *Annapūrṇāshṭamı.*[2] Chaitra śukla eighth. Northern India. Annapūrṇā (Wealth of food) is worshipped as the giver of food, and therefore sustainer of life. The centre of her worship is her famous temple at Benāres, where her image is regarded as representing Primeval Energy.

(*d*) *Kālī pūjā.*[3] Kārttika new moon. Bengal. She is worshipped to-day as representing Primeval Energy. This day commemorates her dance, which was destroying the earth, until Śiva threw himself under her feet, and she found herself treading on her husband and stopped in shame. The story is explained esoterically as the awakening of the human soul to the realisation of its origin from God, forgotten in the tumult of human emotions.

(*e*) *Jagaddhātrī,*[4] *Jagadambā*, or *Kumārī pūjā.* Kārttika śukla ninth. Bengal. On this day woman is worshipped as "World mother," the destroyer of armies of giants, who threaten to extirpate the human race. Jagaddhātrī is summoned into her image in the

[1] *F. & H.*, p. 64. [2] *F. & H.*, p. 4.
[3] *F. & H.*, p. 42. [4] *F. & H.*, p. 39.

morning, worshipped at noon, and again in the evening, after which her spirit is dismissed, and the image consigned to water in the usual way.

(*f*) An *Unmarried Brāhman girl*[1] is worshipped as *Female Energy*, in Mahārāshṭra, on the second or third day of the Navarātra (Āśvina śukla first to tenth). Offerings of oil, ribbons, clothes, flowers, etc., are made to her. This is kept chiefly by women.

(ix) *Ambuvāchī.*[2] Jyeshṭha or Āshāḍha kṛishṇa tenth to thirteenth. Bengal. "Mother Earth" is considered to be unclean during these four days. No ploughing, sowing or cooking is to be done, nor a journey undertaken. On the fourth day stones, representing her, are set up, bathed and garlanded, and the earth is again clean.

This occurs immediately before the rainy season. The rain is understood to cause Mother Earth to become pregnant, and in due course she brings forth grain crops.

(x) and (xi), Lakshmī and Durgā worship, in connection with the seasons, has already been dealt with in Chapter III, but besides the special days devoted to their worship by both sexes, they receive much worship from women at different times, the worship offered being probably a survival of that given to female deities in primitive times.

(x) *Lakshmī* is worshipped besides Dīpāvalī new moon and Kojāgarī full moon, in the bright halves of Chaitra, Bhādrapada and Pausha, in Bengal on the Thursdays, and in Mahārāshṭra on the Fridays. On these days no money is parted with. A corn measure or a basket is filled with grain, garlanded, covered with a cloth and worshipped.

On Āshāḍha new moon[3] she is worshipped by women under the form of lamps. The legend is that a young girl found a ring lost by the king, and asked as her reward that on this new moon night all houses in the city should be darkened, save only hers, in which she and her family lighted all the lamps they

[1] Sharmā, p. 213. [2] *Lunar Year*, p. 285. [3] Gupte, p. 122.

could muster. That night Lakshmī, looking for shelter, went straight to the house whence all the light proceeded, and lavished on the inmates the whole of her gifts.

Women collect all the lamps in the house, and worship them in the name of Lakshmī. This night is sometimes called "The Little Dīpāvalī."

*Note*.—No bells may be used in Lakshmī worship, nor bamboo flute in that of Durgā.

(xi) Under the head of *Durgā* worship may be classed the women's feast of (*a*) *Haritālikā* on Bhādrapada śukla third for Pārvatī worship, which has the same origin as, and may be classed with, the Bengal festival of *Umā chaturthī*. Jyeshṭha śukla fourth.

The legend,[1] from the Bhavishyottara Purāṇa, is as follows:

Pārvatī, also known as Umā, the daughter of Himāchala, had from a child vowed to marry none other than Śiva. When, therefore, on coming of age, she was told that her father, on Sage Nārada's advice, had promised her to Vishṇu, she was very indignant. Taking one companion she ran away into the forest, and on a river bank made three sand liṅgas, which she worshipped, remaining all night awake, singing the praises of Śiva. Being gratified, the great god appeared to her, and promised to grant her any request she might make. She asked that she might become his wife, to which he agreed, and again became invisible. After their night of vigil, Pārvatī and her maid lay down to sleep in the morning, and were found by her father, who was so much relieved to find her safe, that he consented to let her have her wish.

This very human story makes a great appeal to Indian women, most of whom are married in childhood, some against their inclination; and the observance of this day, by unmarried girls, is very general.

Married women, too, keep it, not with the hope of securing the most acceptable husband, which is their

[1] Sharmā, p. 166.

young sisters' object, but in order to secure unwidowed happiness. To neglect it is to court widowhood, loss of sons or wealth, and finally hell.

A woman keeping this festival must bathe at dawn, after anointing with oil, then, having brought sand from a stream of clean water, she must make four lingas, *i.e.* three for Śiva as Pārvatī did, and one for Pārvatī herself. These must be worshipped with flowers and mantras. At the close, an offering must be made to some unwidowed woman. No water must be drunk all day, and only plantains eaten. A vigil must be kept at night, and the ceremony is closed at sunrise next morning by a gift of flowers, turmeric, etc., to the god.

(*b*) *Bhavānyutpatti.* Chaitra śukla eighth. The birthday of Bhavānī, or Pārvatī, is kept on this day by women. They bathe, and worship her image. A similar festival to the above.

(*c*) *Varadā chaturthī.* (Boon-giving or Husband-giving fourth.) Māgha śukla fourth. The goddess Varadā is sometimes identified with Umā, or with Gaurī, and is worshipped in Bengal, chiefly by women, to secure offspring. Flowers, lights, scarlet or saffron threads, and gold bangles are offered.

*Note.*—"Vara" may mean either a boon or a husband. Some take one meaning, some the other.

(xii) *Piṭhorī.*[1] Śrāvaṇa new moon. This is a propitiatory festival to the seven chief goddesses and the sixty-four yoginī or divine attendants on Durgā, kept by unwidowed married women, to gain children and to preserve their unwidowed state. It is not kept as regularly as some of the other goddess-worshipping festivals, but a woman who has lost children will keep it, to gain other children who shall be long-lived. The name is derived from Pīṭha (flour), of which the images are made.

The legend belonging to it is as under:

A woman, named Videhā, gave birth to a child every Śrāvaṇa new moon, which was also the anniversary of

[1] *Hindu Year*, p. 17; Sharmā, p. 159.

the death of her parents-in-law, when their śrāddha was to be performed; and each year, owing to the impurity of child-birth occurring in the house, the śrāddha was unavailing, and, owing to the destruction of the śrāddha, the new-born child died.

At last, the family, growing tired of the annual occurrence, drove Videhā from the house one year with her new-born child, which died in her arms in the forest the same day. She took shelter in the shrine of a goddess, to which the sixty-four yoginī also came at dusk, bearing offerings of jewels, fruit and supāri nuts. When they had offered their gifts at the shrine, they asked: "Is there any other guest (अतिथि) present?" At this Videhā came forward, and announced herself as an Atithi, but unclean owing to the birth and subsequent death of her child. She also told of the death of all her former children, and pleaded for the boon of long life for any others which might be born to her. The yoginī took pity on her, and granted her request, and she went home comforted.

In course of time she became the mother of eight sons, who all attained to manhood.

The woman who keeps this festival must fast on the new moon day, and having bathed must take a cloth, on which are drawn lucky symbols, and place on it eight water pitchers (representing Videhā's eight sons). Upon the pitchers she must place a tray containing images (of gold, if possible) of the seven great goddesses, *viz.* Brāhmī, Māheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaishṇavī, Vārāhī, Indrāṇī and Chāmuṇḍā, and near these, on the ground, sixty-four rice-flour images or supāri nuts (representing the sixty-four yoginī), whom she invokes by name.

Then she worships water pots, goddesses and yoginī, with mantras and the usual offerings of flowers and fruit. After doing so she must ask: "Is any other guest present?" and a boy of the family must answer: "I (name) am present"; whereupon she gives him cakes and other food. The ceremony ends with a present to the priest, and a meal with one or more unwidowed Brāhman women.

This rite is not always performed with the completeness described above. Many women are satisfied with writing the names of the sixty-four yoginī on the house wall, worshipping them, and giving a feast to the children.

(xiii) *Khaṇḍobā* or *Khaṇḍerāo.* Mārgaśīrsha śukla first to sixth. This is the guardian god of the Deccan. Monier Williams[1] believes him to have been "probably a deification of some powerful rājā or aboriginal chieftain, who made himself useful to the Brāhmans." The legend is that a giant, Maṇimalla (or two, Maṇi and Malla), formerly troubled the earth, and that Khaṇḍobā—or Śiva taking his form—after a six days' battle, overcame and slew him. Hence, one of his names is Mallāri (Malla+ari = Enemy of Malla). His chief temples are at Jejurī and Gudguddāpūr (see Chap. VIII, p. 154), where his devotees assemble for this festival, especially on the last day, known as Champā shashṭī. Boys, called Vāghyā, and girls, Muraḷī, were formerly dedicated to him, and even now the practice of marrying girls to him is not unknown, although it has been made illegal to do so. He is worshipped with offerings of turmeric, bel fruit, onions and other vegetables.

Hook-swinging was formerly practised during the festival, but the custom has now been stopped by law.

(xiv) *Viśvakarmā pūjā.*[2] Bhādrapada new moon. Bengal. Viśvakarmā is the tutelary god of artisans, being the architect of the gods, and also the repairer of their weapons injured in battle. He is worshipped in the form of a pitcher, before which are placed the tools and other implements of work of his worshipper.

The day is an artisans' holiday, and is spent in games and feasting.

(xv) *Vyāsa pūjā.*[3] Kārttika full moon. Vyāsa, the reputed compiler of the Vedas, is to be worshipped to-day, and in his name all regular expounders of the Purāṇas also. A similar day is Āshāḍha full moon, known as *Guru pūjā*, when every student worships his

[1] *Religious Life and Thought in India*, p. 266.
[2] *F. & H.*, p. 83.
[3] *F. & H.*; *Hindu Year*, pp. 14, 21.

own teacher, and in villages, if a Guru is non-existent, the chief Brāhman living there is regarded as a suitable substitute.

## II. Spirit Worship

This custom, in the form of offerings to the dead, or rather, offerings to the living in the name of the dead, is of great antiquity in India. It probably arose from the custom, almost universal among primitive people, of providing food and clothing for the spirits of the dead. The recently dead are spoken of as Preta (ghosts; literally, "One who has gone before"). Due offerings made by their heirs raise them to the status of Pitṛi (fathers) by providing them with a body, until they gain an earthly one again, in their next re-birth.

A man should make these offerings, by the rite called śrāddha, to his ancestors, up to, and including, the third generation. "After three generations (the preta) loses its identity and is named no more at the sacrifice, becoming simply one of the Fathers."[1]

The Dharmasindhu[2] gives ninety-six occasions in the year upon which śrāddha should be performed regularly, including the twelve new moons, twelve saṁkrānti, and four yugādi, also the fifteen days of the dark half of Bhādrapada, the five Ashṭakā, and forty-eight other occasions. The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa[3] makes most of these optional, retaining as compulsory the twelve new moons and three Ashṭakā. The[4] Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa gives, as the reason for performing śrāddha on new moon days, that the moon has come to earth, *i.e.* that Soma, the food of the gods and the departed, is unobtainable on that day, therefore the spirits will be without food unless the worshipper provides it.

Popular custom at the present time rules that a man must perform the rite on that day in the dark half of

[1] Hopkins, *India Old and New*, p. 102.
[2] Quoted in Mandlik, *What India Can Teach Us*, p. 296.
[3] XXXI, 20.
[4] *S.B.E.*, XII, p. 362.

Bhādrapada corresponding to the day of decease, and on the anniversary of the decease, to which the more devout add four Ashṭakā. The low castes perform it only on the last day of Bhādrapada, and for one generation only.

There is, besides the idea of giving aid to the spirits of the departed, some hope of reward for the living in the performance of this rite, for we read: "The Pitṛis,[1] when delighted with śrāddhas, bestow long life, wisdom, wealth, knowledge, svarga, final emancipation from existence, and joys and sovereignty." Again, we find that śrāddha performed on different days will be productive of differing benefits to the performer.[2] There is, therefore, every inducement to keep this memorial of the dead.

Only a Brāhman may eat the meal provided for the spirits, so that, in the case of the lower castes, a Brāhman cook must be employed to prepare it. It is not considered very becoming to the dignity and position of a Brāhman to attend as guest at a śrāddha, except among relations. People of Brāhman caste, therefore, when possible, arrange the performance of the rite within the limits of their own family clan. Those of lower caste invite some Brāhman who is not over punctilious about matters of good form.

The ceremony is performed as follows: Invitations are sent to as many Brāhman men as correspond to the number of the dead it is desired to commemorate, and, a meal being prepared, a leaf plate is laid for each guest. Darbha grass is spread about each seat and plate. The after part of the day (as the latter half of the month) belongs particularly to the spirits, therefore the meal must take place after noon. When all are seated, the sacrificer invokes the gods, and then—permission being obtained from the chief Brāhman guest—the spirits. The spirits now being present are offered

[1] *Mārkeṇḍeya Pu*, XXXII, 38.

[2] Sacred Laws of Āryas, *S.B.E.*, II, p. 140; Institutes of Vishṇu, *S.B.E.*, VII, p. 24, etc.

sesamum and water, to which kuśa grass, flowers and fruit are sometimes added. As the offerings are held up, each spirit in turn is named as recipient.[1]

The meal is then brought in and served to the guests, both serving and eating being conducted in silence, the sacrificer meanwhile mentally repeating mantras. It is believed that the spirits receive food and nourishment through the medium of the actual partaker.

The meal finished, balls of rice are offered to the spirits. These balls are not eaten by the guests, but are thrown into fire, or given to a cow. The spirits are then dismissed, afterwards the gods, and the ceremony is complete. The meal usually consists of rice, curds, etc., cooked with plenty of ghī, for "the satisfaction of the manes, if food is mixed with fat, is greater and lasts a longer time."[2]

*Note.*—The sacred cord, usually worn over the left shoulder and under the right arm, is shifted to the right shoulder during the performance of śrāddha.[3]

It will be seen that the rite consists of two distinct parts: (i) The offerings of water, sesamun seeds and rice, which are not partaken of by the guests, and (ii) a substantial meal, which is.

The sixteen days on which śrāddha for personal ancestors is performed are as follows:

(i-xv) *Bhādrapada kṛishṇa first to fifteenth* inclusive. This period is known as the Mahālaya, Pitṛipaksha or Aparapaksha. The sun at this time is in the Rāśi Kanyā (Virgo), and the belief is that at the moment of the entrance, the spirits leave the house of Yama, and come down to occupy the houses of their descendants. Every Hindu should make at least one visit to Gayā, to perform śrāddha there, but, for the sake of the many who cannot do this, it has been decreed that a Mahālaya śrāddha is equal in merit to one performed at Gayā.

[1] Crooke, I, p. 180, etc.
[2] Sacred Laws of the Āryas, *S.B.E.*, II, p. 141.
[3] Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, *S.B.E.*, XII, p. 361, etc., etc.

During this fortnight special days to note are :

(*a*) *Chauthā bharaṇī* or *Bharaṇī pañchamī*, being the fourth or fifth day. On this day the rite is done for one who has died within the past year.

(*b*) *Avidhavā navamī* (Unwidowed ninth), in memory of a woman who has died before her husband. Widowers invite one or more Brāhman women as their guests.

(*c*) *Ghāta chaturdaśī* or *Ghāyāla chaturdaśī* (Violence fourteenth), in memory of one who has died, in battle or otherwise, a violent death.

(*d*) *Sarvapitṛi* amāvāsyā (All Fathers' new moon), the greatest of the fifteen days, upon which it is imperative that a śrāddha be performed, with at least one Brāhman guest, by all who have not previously done so. All ancestors are remembered on this day. The very low castes give balls of flour or rice to the crows, who are believed to be the spirits of the departed.

(xvi) *Mātāmaha* or *Dauhitra* (Mother's father, or, conversely, Daughter's son). The dark half celebrations are closed with a śrāddha on this the first day of the succeeding month, Āśvina. A boy must perform it in memory of his maternal grandfather.

Besides the above, on four days known as the four Ashṭakā (Eighth days) offerings are made, but there is much confusion as to who are supposed to be the recipients.[1] Viśvadeva, the Sun, Agni, Prajāpati, Night, the Nakshatra are all mentioned. These four days are :

(i) Mārgaśīrsha kṛishṇa eighth.

(ii) Pausha kṛishṇa eighth, known as Pushpāshṭakā, as flowers (pushpa) are offered.

(iii) Māgha kṛishṇa eighth, known as Māṁsāshṭakā, as the flesh (māṁsa) of goats or deer is offered.

(iv) Phālguna kṛishṇa eighth, known as Śākāshṭakā, as green herbs (śāka) are offered.

[1] *F. & H.*; and Hillebrandt, Ritual Literatur, *E.I.A.R.*, p. 95.

On two other days śrāddha are performed for other than personal ancestors, *viz.*

(i) *Bhīshmāshṭamī.*[1] Māgha śukla eighth. This is the anniversary of the death of Bhīshma, one of the great heroes of the Mahābhārata, and kinsman alike of the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas. He had made a vow of celibacy, in order that his stepmother's children should have no rival but succeed to their father's inheritance. But the stepmother proved childless, and therefore there were no descendants to perform Bhīshma's śrāddha, which they would have done in place of the sons whom he had so nobly forgone.

So the whole nation, including men of all castes, were enjoined to perform this rite to his memory, at noon, on the anniversary of his death, offering water, sesamum and boiled rice.

Reflexly, the sins of a whole year committed by a man who observes this command will be expiated thereby.

This custom is dying out, but still exists in places.

(ii) *Bhūta* or *Naraka chaturdaśī.* (Ghost or Hell Fourteenth.) Āśvina kṛishṇa fourteenth. (See also Chap. III, p. 59). On this day offerings of water and sesamum are made to Yama, after bathing at dawn; fourteen sorts of herbs are eaten, and fourteen lamps are lighted in the evening, to deliver from the fear of hell.

Yama or Pitṛipati[2] (Lord of the Fathers) was in early times believed to be the first of mortals to die, and to him in his abode of Yamaloka in the South the spirits of all proceeded. All who died went first to him, afterwards going on to heaven or hell. Yamaloka was not necessarily a place of suffering, see *e.g.* the legend of Indra (Chap. V, p. 88), but in later mythology he became more closely associated with the terrors of death, and Yamaloka became synonymous with Naraka

[1] *F. & H.*, p. 9.

[2] Vedic Mythology, A. A. Macdonell, *E.I.A.R.*, p. 171.
Epic Mythology, Washburn Hopkins, *E.I.A.R.*, p. 107.

(hell). By propitiating him on this day it is hoped to escape from suffering when one's spirit goes to him.

## III. Animal Worship

The chief animals worshipped in India to-day are cows and oxen, monkeys and snakes. Horses are worshipped on Dasarā day in the Deccan (see p. 57), but this is more for their connection with war than for themselves. Again, dogs are worshipped in connection with Kāla Bhairava, but this is only a local custom. Also,[1] when an intercalary Āshāḍha occurs, women daily during the intercalary month worship the kokila (a species of cuckoo), but this is in memory of Satī, wife of Śiva, who destroyed herself in the sacrificial fire of her father, Daksha, having quarrelled with him, and for defiling the holy fire was changed into a kokila. There is nothing sacred about the bird itself.

The worship of the first-named three classes is common throughout all India.

(i) *Cow and Ox Worship.* Originally cattle[2] were not considered sacred. In Vedic times they were killed for food. In the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa instructions are given for celebrating the visit of a king by eating beef.

But their usefulness and value to an agricultural people became the cause of their first being considered too valuable, then too sacred, to be killed, and they became, by easy stages, objects of worship. By Manu's time they were established as sacrosanct, and their worship has not decreased with time.

At the same time the bull has come to be considered the symbol of fertility, and his worship is closely connected with that of the Śiva emblem.

Most Brāhman households possess at least one cow, which is regarded almost as a member of the family. To touch her in passing is purifying, and to mark her forehead with the red circle denoting the happy unwidowed state is very common. Cow's milk may

[1] Gupte. [2] Crooke, II, p. 227.

be drunk from the hands of one of lower caste, its purity being beyond defilement.

Certain days are appointed for cow-worship, and certain others for that of the farm and draught bullocks, as under:

(*a*) *Govatsa dvādaśī*, Āśvina kṛishṇa twelfth; Mahārāshṭra. *Govatsa dvādaśī*, Śrāvaṇa kṛishṇa fourth; Gujarāt. *Gopāshṭamī*, Kārttika śukla eighth; Mahārāshṭra. *Bahulā*, Śrāvana kṛishṇa fourth; Bengal. *Vasū bārasa*, Vsākha śaiukla first and Jyeshṭha śukla second; Eastern Bengal.

On these days cows and their calves are worshipped, chiefly by women, offerings of food are made to them, and their foreheads are marked with the red lead circle. No woman must touch wheat, milk, curds, whey or ghī on the day of worship.

(*b*) Cow's footprints, called Gopada, are drawn on the earth near a temple or tank, and worshipped by women daily during the four months.

(*c*) *Poḷā*, Srāvaṇa or Bhādrapada new moon; Deccan. *Bendūra*, Āshāḍha śukla thirteenth or Kārttika śukla first; Konkan. *Pongal*, Makara Saṁkrānti; Southern India.

On these days bullocks are given a rest from work, and are feasted, as a thanksgiving for their labour. They are also worshipped. Details of the ceremony vary with the district, but a procession of bullocks, adorned with tassels, garlands, paint, etc., is a feature in all.

This festival is not of great antiquity, and is not mentioned in Vedic or post-Vedic literature. It is chiefly a farmers' festival, held at the harvesting of the staple grain of the district, which explains the variation in the date at which it occurs. Pious Brāhmans, however, will sometimes make earthen images of bullocks and worship them at this time. The connection with the harvest is shown in the Marāṭhī proverb, माघीं आळें बेंदुरीं फळ (In Māgha water [at the roots], at Bendūra fruit).

The Mahārāshṭra custom is to wash the animals and anoint them with oil in the morning, paint their horns and adorn them with gilt, or coloured paper, and put

tassels and brass ornaments on the tips. Hand prints are marked on their bodies and marigold garlands put round their necks. The sara or horn-encircling rope is renewed. Each family worships its own animals, at home, sometimes by circumambulations. They are then taken out in the evening to join the others in a procession through the village, led by the headman's bullocks.

(ii) *Monkey Worship*. This worship is in the popular mind due to the help given by the monkey tribe to Rāma, in his search for, and rescue of, Sītā.

It is evidently a relic from very ancient times, earlier than the epic legend which to-day is believed to account for it. The aboriginal tribes who helped King Rāma in his battles became, later, identified with the monkeys, who were already worshipped, possibly on account of their strange likeness to men.

With regard to Hanumān, the monkey-hero of the Rāmāyaṇa, Crooke[1] says he is the survival of a Dravidian god; Monier Williams[2] says he is a "poetical deification" of some aboriginal tribe-leader, who helped Rāma in his wars against Rāvaṇa; and Sir Alfred Lyall[3] writes: "It seems as if hero-worship and animal-worship had got mixed up in the legend of Hanumān."

Throughout India monkeys are considered sacred, and are worshipped, monkey temples existing in many places, but one special day is devoted to Hanumān, *viz.* *Hunumajjayantī* (Hanumān's birthday), Chaitra full moon.

This day is very generally observed throughout Mahārāshṭra, especially by members of the Rāmdās sect. Temples and isolated shrines and images are common all over the Deccan, where he is usually called Mārutī, from a legend to the effect that his father was the wind-god, Māruta. His mother was Añjanī, and her son was given as a boon by Umā for prayers made to her.

The favourite legend about Hanumān, related to his worshippers on this day, is that of his leap from India

[1] Dravidians, *E.R.E.*, V.
[2] *Religious Life of the Hindus*, p. 220.
[3] *Asiatic Studies*, p. 13.

to Laṅkā (Ceylon), and his discovery there of Sītā in Rāvaṇa's palace garden; and of his building the rock-bridge to enable Rāma and his army to cross the channel.

Another legend, equally well known, is that at his birth he saw the red sun, newly risen, and leaped up to reach it, thinking it a fruit. He soon discovered his mistake, but was able to strike down Rāhu, whom he found about to swallow the sun. Pictures of this leap in mid air are very widespread, and are worshipped in the house on his birthday.

Worship is also offered at any one of his shrines, in the morning, the worshipper having risen before dawn, and bathed.

*Note.*—Hanumān is one of the seven Chirañjīva, *i.e.* Immortal ones.[1]

(iii) *Snake Worship.*[2] Much has been written on this subject, and general modern opinion is that it was, probably, not known to the Āryan immigrants. There is no trace of it in the Ṛigveda, where Ahi is a noxious animal, slain by Indra. But the Āryans found it all over the land, and by degrees incorporated it into Hinduism; for the Yajurveda teaches reverence for snakes; Manu grants them the honour of descent from himself; and in the Purāṇas and Epics we find them installed as a semi-divine race. Arjuna, the most famous of the five Pāṇḍava brothers, married Ulupī, a snake-woman, and Kṛishṇa, in the Bhagavadgītā, identifies himself with Ananta.

There still exists a very persistent belief in a race of Nāgas or snake-people, who lived in Epic times and earlier, and whose women were of great beauty, intermarrying with gods and men.

[1] *I.A.*, XL, p. 55.

[2] Dravidians, W. Crooke, *E.R.E.*, V; Crooke, II, p. 123 f.; *Religion des Veda*, Oldenberg, trans. Henry, p. 57 f.; *Code of Manu*, I, 37 (*S.B.E.*, XXV, p. 15); *Brāhmanism and Hinduism*, Monier Williams, p. 323; *Bom. Gaz.*, XVIII; *Imp. Gaz.*, II, p. 217; "Snake and Tree Worship," Fergusson; *S.B.E.*, XXIX, pp. 129, 201.

Certain tribes and castes to-day, *i.e.* the Nhāvis of the Deccan, the Kūrs of Chotā Nāgpūr, and some of the Mysore princely families, claim descent from the Nāgas, holding themselves, in the case of the first-named, superior to any other caste on the strength of it. This claim to superior rank is not, however, allowed by members of other castes. Some think the origin of this belief lies in the former existence of a race of Scythians with a snake as their national emblem, who settled in India either before or after the immigration of the Āryans.

The first mention of these Nāga people is found in the Sūtras. The Gṛihya Sūtra enjoins the worship of "Celestial, Aerial and Terrestrial serpents" by a householder on Śrāvana full moon.

There is a close connection between snakes and "earth-mothers," as is natural, seeing that snakes live chiefly in holes in the ground; and many people consider them guardians of hidden treasure.

Their worship is also connected with the desire for longevity and fertility, as is seen from certain legends and customs, *e.g.* that quoted by Monier Williams, that earth from a snake hole, if put into the mouth daily, will cause fertility.

Crooke traces the evolution of a snake into a deity through three stages, from the natural fear and aversion in which they were first held, to the harmless house snake's becoming identified with the spirit of an ancestor, returned in another form to live in the familiar spot, then snake-charmers became regarded as wizards, then as priests, and but a short step was necessary to the identification of snakes with gods. Most Hindus will not kill even a poisonous snake, they fear revenge from the rest of its tribe.

Some dozen snakes are known to legend and are worshipped to-day, including, among the best known, *Śesha*, the thousand-headed, living below the world, on whom Vishṇu reclines during his four months' sleep; *Ananta* (the Endless), who encircles the earth, and symbolises eternity, and is sometimes

looked upon as a manifestation of Vishṇu; *Vāsuki*, who became the churning-rope at the churning of the milky ocean by gods and demons; *Takshaka*, the lord of the snake-people, against whom Janamejaya waged a war of extermination; *Kāliya*, the river snake, subdued by Kṛishṇa after several days of struggle in the depths of the Yamunā; but older than all these, and more worshipped, is *Manasā*, "the mother snake-goddess of the early village founders."[1]

Snake images, usually representing cobras, are found under trees and by the roadsides everywhere, and the passers-by bow to them. Besides this occasional worship, special snake festivals are held, as under:

(*a*) *Ananta chaturdaśī.*[2] Bhādrapada or Āśvina śukla fourteenth. On this day the snake Ananta is worshipped as symbolising Vishṇu, with offerings of flowers. It is a man's festival only, and is rapidly losing its character of a snake worship day and becoming a Vishṇu worship day. The legend attached to it is about a certain Suśīlā, who was taught a means of obtaining any desire she might have by worshipping pitchers of water, while dressed in red garments, afterwards binding a red silk cord on her wrist. This ceremony is supposed to have been taught to the Pāṇḍavas by Kṛishṇa, to enable them to gain their great desire of overcoming the Kauravas, and it is practised to-day by those who have some personal wish which they desire fulfilled.

The ritual prescribed is as follows: The worshipper must bathe in the morning and fast. At noon a copper vessel must be filled with clean water, and draped with garments, and darbha grass must be taken and twisted into the form of a snake. In a clear space a square altar of rice must be made, upon which the copper vessel is placed, with the grass snake image before it. Both are then worshipped with lengthy mantras and offerings of fourteen kinds of fruit. A red silk cord,

[1] Hewitt, p. 356.
[2] Sharmā, p. 206; *Hindu Year*, p. 18; *F. & H.*, p. 3.

composed of fourteen threads and in which fourteen knots are tied, is then taken, worshipped and fastened round the right wrist.

This ceremony, if performed for fourteen years in succession, will give long life and fulfill any desire. Every year a new cord is assumed, the old one being given, with a fee and presents, to the officiating priest.

(*b*) *Nāga pañchamī.*[1] Śrāvaṇa śukla fifth, or, less commonly, Mārgaśīrsha śukla fifth. This day celebrates the return of Kṛishṇa from the Yamunā after having overcome the big river snake Kāliya. Kṛishṇa had fallen into the river from a tree overhanging the bank, into which he had climbed to fetch a ball which had lodged there while he was playing with the herdspeople. His return with the snake was received with joy, the herdsmen offering Kāliya milk in gratitude for his not having harmed their favourite, Kṛishṇa. And so the festival was instituted.

Another legend says that a man, ignorant of the festival, while ploughing on this day killed a nest of young snakes. The mother snake, in revenge, in the night bit the man and all his family, except one married daughter living in another village. Having killed all but this daughter, the mother snake set out for that village to kill her also. But the girl, knowing of the festival, had put out a dish of appetising food, which the snake tasted, and which gratified her so much that she not only refrained from killing the girl, but gave her a healing lotion to sprinkle on the bodies of the parents and other children, whereby they were all restored to life. After this, the festival became general.

It is observed by keeping a fast from noon on the fourth, and bathing at dawn on the fifth, after which either an earthen image of a cobra or a picture must be worshipped; by placing saucers of milk near known or suspected snake holes, as an offering; and by rigidly abstaining from digging, ploughing or otherwise

[1] Sharmā, p. 110.

disturbing the earth, whereby snakes might be injured. Women also abstain from grinding, pounding rice, and even from slicing vegetables. In the after part of the fifth feasts are held, and giving of presents and holiday-making are general.

If, within a month of this festival, a snake bites anyone who has kept the law of offering milk, etc., on this day it may be killed without mercy or fear of retaliation. Its life is forfeit, on account of its ingratitude.

In Mahārāshṭra the festival is a favourite one with the women of the agricultural castes. They meet in bands, and dance in rings, afterwards worshipping the earthen snake image made for this occasion and set up in the village.

(*c*) *Manasā pañchamī.*[1] Āshāḍha kṛishṇa fifth. Bengal, Northern and Southern India.

Manasā is the third of the legendary snake deities which have special days appointed for their worship. Manasā combines in herself the properties of one of the mother-earth-guardians, and of the snakes. She is not found in the classic list of the nine big snakes, *viz.* Vāsuki, Ananta, Śesha, Takshaka, Kāliya, Padmanābha, Kambala, Śaṅkhapāla, and Dhṛitarāshṭra,[2] but she is even more popular than they in Northern India. She is not worshipped in Mahārāshṭra.

There are no less than four legends about her, which are repeated to worshippers on this day :

(*a*) While Vishṇu and the other gods were sleeping, during the four rainy months, Manasā kept watch in a snuhī tree to protect men—as the legend adds—from snake bite.

Here we see her guardian-mother nature uppermost, and it possibly gives a clue to her becoming identified with the snakes. She was the protectress of mankind, guarding them from their most dangerous enemy during the rainy months. Hence she became the queen

[1] *F. & H.*, p. 57 ; *Lunar Year*, p. 287.

[2] Molesworth, नवनाग ; Sharmā, p. 117.

of snakes, able to control their actions, hence the snake-queen-goddess.

(*b*) In Southern India the story goes that a boy, gathering ketakī flowers for his sister, was bitten by a cobra and died. His sister, by worshipping Manasā on this day, was able to persuade her to restore the boy to life, so that the day which began in mourning ended in joy and feasting.

(*c*) A certain merchant refused to worship Manasā, who in revenge killed all his sons in turn, by allowing her subjects to bite them. The last son was bitten on the day of his marriage to a pious girl, named Vehulā The bride refused to give up the body for burning, but put it on a raft, and, crouching beside it, pushed out into the stream of a big river. Here they drifted for many days, the girl exposed to cold and heat, hunger and thirst, but never ceasing to implore Manasā to relent and restore her husband. Her prayers and austerities proved too powerful to resist, and at length Manasā took pity on the poor little bride, and restored her husband to life on an Āshāḍha kṛishṇa fifth.

In both of these two last legends we have the belief that persons dead from snake bite can be restored to life. There are probably instances, giving rise to such legends, of apparent death from this cause, which prove to be cases of suspended animation only, the bitten person ultimately recovering.

(*d*) A girl, unpopular with her husband's family, was carried off by Manasā to her underground palace, where she lived for some time in great happiness and prosperity with the Nāga people, who adopted her as one of themselves.

On her return to the upper earth she was not ashamed of her snake kindred, but acknowledged them. This so much gratified them, that they loaded her and her husband's family with treasure, and guaranteed their prosperity as long as snake worship was regularly observed by them. Needless to add, the girl became a great favourite and her future happiness was insured.

Here we see the connection traced between the snake tribe and buried treasure discovered by a girl. It was assumed that she must have been given treasure by the guardians of it, and so the legend was evolved.

The observances for this day are similar to those in the Deccan on Nāga pañchamī, with the addition, in the United Provinces, of the following custom: For seven days before the festival, *i.e.* from Āshāḍha śukla fourteenth, gram, pulse and wheat are steeped in water. On the kṛishṇa fifth a wisp of grass is taken, twisted into snake form, dipped into the water in which is the grain, and given as an offering to the snakes.

Here the connection between the snake tribe and the fertility of the crops is obvious. Another day for Manasā worship is

*Arandhanam.* Bhādrapada (or Āśvina) new moon. Bengal. On this day no cooking may be done. The oven is painted with rice powder, and a branch of the hedge plant called Manasā is put in it. The snake goddess is worshipped.

This rite connects snake worship with household prosperity.

In some parts of India[1] Manasā worship appears to have a place in the Daśaharā observances.

## IV. Worship of Plants and Inanimate Things

Many trees and other plants are objects of worship. The *Pippal*, in which the ghosts of young Brāhman boys are believed to live, and which is considered a symbol of Vishṇu; the *Bel*, or wood-apple, sacred to Śiva, and not to be used for firewood except by Brāhmans; the *Śamī*, worshipped at the Dasarā; and the *Cocoanut*, often used in worship as the symbol of fertility. Besides these, the *Kuśa*, *Dūrvā* and *Darbha* grasses are all sacred, and used in many ceremonies. Of the last named the Pavitra or ring is made, worn by a priest and worshippers during certain rites; and Dūrvā is

[1] *F. & H.*, p. 15.

used in the Dūrvāshtamī rite on Bhādrapada śukla eighth (Chap. III, p. 52).

But a few trees have a special day set apart for their worship, as under:

(i) *Vaṭ pūrṇimā.*[1] Jyeshṭha full moon (new moon). Western (Northern) India. This day, sometimes called Vaṭ Sāvitrī, is kept over a good part of India, being observed very strictly in the Deccan, where frequently three days, the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth, are kept.

The legend giving rise to it, according to popular belief, is the well-known story from the Mahābhārata[2] of Sāvitrī and Satyavān, which is more loved by the women of India than any other, saving perhaps that of Sītā.

Sāvitrī chose as her husband the ill-fated Satyavān, son of a king who had been driven into exile on account of blindness. Having been told that her husband would die a year after marriage, Sāvitrī spent the last three days of that year in fasting and prayer. On the last day she accompanied Satyavān on a woodcutting expedition.

When he became overcome with weariness and approaching death, she sat down under a Vaṭ (banyan) tree, with his head in her lap, and awaited the coming of Yama with his noose to catch and bear away her husband's spirit. Then follows the story of how she leaves her husband's body to the care of the tree, and persistently follows Yama, over rough ground, through forests and across mountains, in his journey with Satyavān's spirit to his abode in the South.

Time after time Yama tries to make her turn back, offering one boon after another, *viz.* her father-in-law's restored sight and kingdom, the prosperity of her own parents, etc. But nothing will induce her to leave her husband's spirit. Finally, Yama promises her the boon of one hundred sons, whereupon she claims her husband's

[1] *F. & H.*, p. 71; Sharmā, p. 67; *Hindu Year*, pp. 12, 32.
[2] *Pativratā Mahātmya.*

restoration to life as the only possible means of the boon's fulfilment, and Yama is forced to consent. Then comes the sudden finding of herself and the sleeping Satyavān again under the friendly Vaṭ tree, his awakening to life, and the fulfilment of all Yama's promises.

The tree does not play an important part in the tale, but is the principal object of worship at the memorial festival, which is observed by married women only, men, widows and children having no part in it.

A fast is ordained, and very religious women keep it for three days, as Sāvitrī did; all must keep it for at least one day. In the house a picture of a Vaṭ tree, Sāvitrī, Yama and Satyavān is drawn with sandal paste and rice flour on the floor or wall, and, where possible, gold images of the prince and his wife are set in a tray of sand. The pictures and images are worshipped, with mantras and offerings of Vaṭ leaves. Out of doors the tree is worshipped with mantras, and a thread is wound about it, while offerings of copper coins and fruit are made. The due performance of these rites is believed to insure long life to one's husband. Women greet each other with, "जन्म सावित्री हो" (Become as Sāvitrī).

Gupte[1] believes the festival to be a Nature myth, typifying the annual marriage of Earth (Satyavān) to Nature (Sāvitrī). The Earth dies every year, but is revivified by the powers of Nature.

The choice of a Vaṭ tree is likely to be due to ancient worship of this tree, typifying, by its aerial roots which finally take root in the ground, becoming new tree trunks while still part of the parent tree, the continuity of life.

(ii) *Aśokāshṭamī.*[2] Chaitra śukla eighth. This day coincides with the Brahmaputra bathing festival (see p. 103), but the aśoka tree worship is quite distinct from the river worship, and is confined to women only. It also appears to be quite distinct from the Aśoka sixth, two days earlier, for securing the welfare of children (see p. 104), in connection with which there

[1] P. 246. [2] *F. & H.*, p. 7; *Lunar Year*, p. 277.

is no tree worship, the use of the flowers being apparently due to the name A+śoka = the Absence of Sorrow (the same as the Aduḥkha ninth on Bhādrapada śukla ninth given in some calendars.)

The legend is that Rāvaṇa, having carried off Sītā, wife of Rāma, imprisoned her in a grove of aśoka trees, where she continually prayed for deliverance and restoration to her husband. Hanumān, the monkey-god, searching for her, saw her praying under an aśoka tree on this day, and took the news of her whereabouts to Rāma, so that he was able to rescue her. In memory of this event women now worship the tree on this day, embracing it, and eating its leaves, to secure immunity from sorrow, especially that of becoming widows. Both festivals, on the sixth and the eighth, are probably due to the name of the tree.

(iii) *Tulasī vivāhā.*[1] (Tulasī Wedding.) Kārttika śukla eleventh and twelfth.

The tulasī plant is to be found growing in the courtyard of most Brāhman houses, in a brick or plaster pedestal, called the Vṛindāvana. It is worshipped every evening by the women of the house, who circumambulate it, carefully water it, place a lamp at its foot by night, etc. All Hindus, of whatever caste, venerate it where they do not actually worship. No gardener will cut or uproot it, but the leaves may be plucked by day (not after dark) for offerings.

The day set apart for its special worship is the day of, or following, the close of Vishṇu's four months' sleep, when he is married to the tulasī plant. The legends referring to it are two:

(*a*) Lakshmī averted trouble from mankind by slaying a demon, and remained on earth in the form of this plant to be a tangible object of man's worship. The favourite legend is, however, the following:

(*b*) Vṛindā, wife of Jalandhara, was renowned for her beauty and virtue, the latter being so great that it

[1] *Bom. Gaz.*, XVIII, p. 253; Sharmā, p. 235; *Hindu Year*, pp. 22, 35.

gave power to her husband, insomuch that Śiva, who wished to kill him, could not obtain the mastery over him. Finding his only hope of overcoming the husband was to destroy the wife's virtue, Śiva persuaded Vishṇu to betray her, which he was only able to compass by going to her in the likeness of her husband.

When she found she had been deceived, Vṛindā built a pyre and immolated herself upon it. Jalandhara also was killed by Śiva. But Vishṇu had fallen in love with Vṛindā, and was so much distressed at her death that he refused to be comforted until the gods planted a tulasī shrub, and summoned her spirit into it. Since then she is believed to come into the shrub every evening, for the night, leaving it in the morning. This is the reason why the leaves must not be plucked after sunset.

On the day preceding that of the festival (which may be celebrated on any day between the eleventh and the fifteenth, though usually on the twelfth) the vṛindāvana is cleaned and painted and garlanded, while fruit and flowers and all things necessary for the ceremony are made ready. On the wedding day a fast is kept till evening, when, having bathed and assumed white garments, the officiating priest brings some emblem of Vishṇu to the plant. This may be an image of Vishṇu, Balarāma, or Kṛishṇa, but is frequently the śālagrāma stone (see p. 131).

Both the emblem and the plant are washed with warm water and the five amṛita (a mixture of milk, curds, ghī, honey and sugar). Men's clothing, a sacred cord, and sandal paste are offered to Vishṇu, and turmeric, red lead, the marriage neck-thread, etc., to Vṛindā, with mantras. Then, as in actual marriages, a shawl is held between the two, the officiating priest repeats mantras, and, at a signal, the shawl is dropped and rice showered upon the pair. The Vishṇu emblem is made to touch the plant, a lamp is waved round them for luck, and the marriage is complete. The priest receives a wedding fee and a feast is held.

This festival is observed chiefly, but not entirely, by women.

*Note.*—Monier Williams[1] quotes the following verses, showing the very great reverence in which the tulasī plant is held :

यन्मूले सर्वतीर्थानि यन्मध्ये सर्वदेवताः ।
यदाग्रे सर्ववेदाश्च तुलसीं तां नमाम्यहम् ॥

"I adore that tulasī in whose roots are all the sacred places of pilgrimage, in whose centre are all the deities, and in whose upper branches are all the Vedas."

(iv) The *Śālagrāma*[2] is a black stone found in the river Gaṇḍakī in Nepal, sometimes pierced with holes, believed to be the work of a legendary worm known as Vajakītā. Some say the real stone should be an ammonite, others that it may merely bear the impression of one.

It is sacred to Vishṇu, as he is believed to live in it. No orthodox Vaishṇava house is without one as an object of worship. It takes the place of a Vishṇu image at the will of the worshipper, and is frequently used in the marriage with the tulasī plant (as above).

One authority states that it was Vṛindā's hair only which became that plant, her body became the river Gaṇḍakī, which gives the connection between the plant and the stone.

The use of the stone to represent Vishṇu was not known even as late as Epic times, but it has come to be more than a symbol of him. He is believed to be immanent in it.

(v) *Knotted Thread Worship.* Three festivals remain, all kept on Śrāvaṇa full moon, when knotted threads are the object of reverence and worship. The wearing of threads as charms, on neck or wrist, enters into many ceremonies (see Ananta fourteenth, p. 122; Kāla Bhairava, p. 96, etc.), and, as is well known, the wearing of the sacred cord by members of the three upper castes dates back to Vedic times. Directions

[1] *Religious Life of the Hindus*, p. 333.

[2] *Original Inhabitants of India*, Oppert, p. 356 ; *I.A.*, XXV, p. 146 ; Epic Mythology, Hopkins, *E.I.A.R.*, p. 209 ; Barth, trans. Wood, p. 262.

as to initiation and the subsequent wearing of the cord are met with frequently in Vedic literature.

Students of folklore trace the custom back to fear of evil spirits, the sacred thread, like the magic circle known to many primitive people, being believed to form a barrier which demons cannot cross. Campbell[1] states that knots are tied for the same purpose, as a knot is circular in shape. In support of this theory a few customs may be quoted:

A thread is wound round a pippal tree believed to be inhabited by the spirit of a Brāhman boy. The Kāyats[2] of Khāndesh remove their sacred cord when they wish to get drunk, resuming it when they are again sober. In both these cases the thread is considered a barrier: in the first it is used to prevent the ghost from leaving the tree to annoy women (its favourite objects of torment), and in the second it is removed so that the spirit inhabiting the intoxicating drink may not be prevented from entering the man's body, or from leaving it afterwards. Again, the marriage neck-string is broken when a woman's husband dies, not to signify the breaking of the marriage, which is still considered real and binding, but possibly that her husband's spirit may not be prevented from visiting her.[3]

When a thread or cord is held in so much veneration as has been indicated above, it is but a short step to the actual worship of the thread itself, which is the result in the India of to-day.

(*a*) *Śrāvaṇī pūrṇimā.*[4] On this day all Brāhmans must renew the sacred cord which they constantly wear. The ordinance appears to be that only students of the Vedas should renew the cord, as the day is sometimes called Ṛig-Yaju Śrāvaṇī, but as a matter of custom all who have been initiated and wear the cord do so.

[1] Spirit Basis, etc., *I.A.*, XXIV, p. 131.
[2] *Bom. Gaz.*, XII, p. 55.
[3] Cp. Spirit Basis, etc., *I.A.*, XXIV, p. 131.
[4] *Hindu Year*, p. 16; Sharmā, p. 127.

Rising at dawn, the Brāhman must bathe and don white garments, then join a company of others in a temple court, or other wide, convenient place. Each is attended by his family priest, but the prayers and ceremonies are conducted in the name of all, by one leading priest, sitting on an earthen platform before them. He begins by worshipping Gaṇeśa, to ensure success, and then builds a sacrificial fire and performs the daily sacrifice enjoined on all Brāhmans. Later he places eight supāri nuts, or eight darbha grass rings, on a tray, representing the seven Ṛishis and Arundhatī (see Chap. IV, p. 72), and worships them with mantras and offering of flowers, the assembled men and boys bowing before them.

Each then eats two balls of flour and milk, takes off his old cord, and casts it into the sacrificial fire. Then each gives the new cord (of cotton, in a three-fold twist), with which he has come provided, to his own priest, repeating ten Gāyatrīs over it. It is then put on. There follows the worship of Brahmā, the casting of scented flowers and sacred rice into the fire, and the giving of presents to the priests, and the ceremony is over.

(*b*) *Pavitrāropaṇa.*[1] On the same day Pavitras or Poṅvates are made. These are rings, wristlets or necklets made from strands of cotton thread, of varying lengths, with a varying number of twists and of knots, *e.g.* the best Poṅvate is nine-stranded, with one hundred and eight twists and twenty-four knots, and reaches to the knees, another may have twelve twists and twelve knots, etc.

The required number having been made, they are collected and sprinkled with Pañchagavya (see p. 73 footnote), washed, and consecrated with mantras. They are then worshipped, and afterwards offered to different gods. One is usually wound round a Śiva liṅga ; another laid at Vishṇu's feet, a third given to the family priest, etc. Vaishṇavas of all castes and both

[1] Sharmā, p. 129.

sexes are required to offer a poṅvate every year to Vishṇu. A vigil should be kept all the succeeding night, and sometimes the ceremony is repeated on the following day.

(*c*) *Rakshā*[1] or *Rākhī bandhana*. Closely allied to the preceding ceremony, and possibly a popular form of it among the commoner people, is the custom of binding a silk thread, with tinsel ornament, on to the wrist of another, to preserve him from evil. Mothers frequently bind them on their children's arms, wives on their husbands, sisters on their brothers.

The legend is that, while men and gods were still under Bali's tyranny, before Vishṇu took the Vāmana incarnation, Indrāṇī, wife of Indra, procured such a thread from Vishṇu, and tied it round Indra's wrist, whereby he became protected from Bali.[2]

While tying it one should say the following mantra:

येन बद्धोबलि राजा दानवेंद्रो महाबलः ।
तेन त्वामपिबध्नामि रक्षे मा चल मा चल ॥

("That by which the great, strong, demon-king Bali was bound, with that I too bind thee. Oh! amulet, do not slip off.")

[1] *Hindu Year*, pp. 16, 33 ; Sharmā, p. 132.
[2] See Chap III, p. 60.

# CHAPTER VII

## CHART OF FOREGOING MONTHLY FESTIVALS

### CHAITRA

| | *Śuklapaksha* | *Light half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Dhvajāropaṇa or Navavarshārambha .. | Standard raising or New Year | III |
| 2 | — .. | — | |
| 3 (*a*) | Gaurī tritīyā .. | Gaurī's second | VI |
| (*b*) | Matsya jayantī .. | Fish birthday | V |
| 4 | Vināyakī chaturthī .. | Vināyaka's fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | Śrī pañchamī (see Māgha śu. fifth) .. | Goddess' fifth | III |
| 6 (*a*) | Skanda shashṭhī .. | Skanda's sixth | V |
| (*b*) | Aśoka shashṭhī .. | Sorrow-free sixth | VI |
| 7 | — .. | — | |
| 8 (*a*) | Durgāshṭamī .. | Durgā's eighth | V |
| (*b*) | Bhavānyutpatti .. | Bhavānī's creation | VI |
| (*c*) | Annapūrṇā .. | Harvest-mother | VI |
| (*d*) | Aśokāshṭamī .. | Sorrow-free eighth | VI |
| (*e*) | Brahmaputra snāna .. | Brahmaputra bathing | VI |
| 9 | Rāma navamī or Rāma jayantī .. | Rāma's birthday | V |
| 10 | — .. | — | |
| 11 | Kāmadaikādaśī .. | Wish-granting eleventh | V |
| 12 | — .. | — | |
| 13 (*a*) | Madana trayodaśī or Anaṅga pūjā .. | Love-god's thirteenth | III |
| (*b*) | Pradosha .. | Evening fast | V |
| 14 | — .. | — | |
| 15 (*a*) | Hanumajjayantī .. | Hanumān's birthday | VI |
| (*b*) | Pūrṇimā .. | Full moon | |

On all Thursdays worship of Lakshmī (Bengal).
On all Fridays „ „ „ (Mahārāshṭra).

## CHAITRA

| | *Kṛishṇapaksha* | | *Dark half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | — | .. | — | |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 | Saṁkashṭa chaturthī | .. | Difficult fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | — | .. | — | |
| 6 | — | .. | — | |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 | Kālāshṭamī | .. | Black eighth | V |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | — | .. | — | |
| 11 | Varūthinyekādaśī | .. | Equipment eleventh | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 (*a*) | Vāruṇī (see also Phāl. kṛi. thirteenth) | .. | Bathing festival | VI |
| (*b*) | Śivarātri | .. | Śiva's night | V |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 | Amāvāsyā | .. | New moon | |

## VAIŚĀKHA

| | *Śuklapaksha* | | *Light half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Vasū bārasa | .. | Cow worship | VI |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 (*a*) | Kṛitayugādi (or Tretā-yugādi) | .. | Anniversary of Kṛita (or Tretā) yuga | III |
| (*b*) | Akshayya tritīyā | .. | Unperishing third | III |
| (*c*) | Paraśurāma jayantī | .. | Rāma-with-the axe birthday | V |
| (*d*) | Gaurī pūjā samāpti | .. | End of Gaurī worship | VI |
| 4 | Vināyakī chaturthī | .. | Vināyaka's fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | — | .. | — | |
| 6 | — | .. | — | |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 | Durgāshṭamī | .. | Durgā's eighth | V |
| 9 | Sītā jayantī | .. | Sītā's birthday | VI |
| 10 | — | .. | — | |
| 11 | Mohinyekādaśī | .. | Temptation eleventh | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 | Pradosha | .. | Evening fast | V |
| 14 | Nṛisiṁha jayantī | .. | Man-lion birthday | V |
| 15 (*a*) | Kūrma jayantī | .. | Tortoise birthday | V |
| (*b*) | Pushpadola | .. | Flower swinging | V |
| (*c*) | Pūrṇimā | .. | Full moon | |

## VAIŚĀKHA

| | *Kṛishṇapaksha* | | *Dark half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | — | .. | — | |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 | Saṁkashṭa chaturthī | .. | Difficult fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | — | .. | — | |
| 6 | — | .. | — | |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 | Kālāshṭamī | .. | Black eighth | V |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | — | .. | — | |
| 11 | Aparaikādaśī | .. | Unequalled eleventh | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 | Śivarātri | .. | Śiva's night | V |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 | Amāvāsyā | .. | New moon | |

## JYESHṬHA

| | *Śuklapaksha* | | *Light half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Daśaharā or Gaṅgotsavārambha | .. | Beginning of Daśaharā or Gaṅgā festival | VI |
| 2 | Vasū bārasa | .. | Cow worship | VI |
| 3 | Rambhā tritīyā | .. | Rambhā's third | VI |
| 4 (*a*) | Vināyakī chaturthī | .. | Vināyaka's fourth | IV, V |
| (*b*) | Umā ,, | .. | Umā's fourth | VI |
| 5 | — | .. | — | |
| 6 (*a*) | Shashṭhī devī | .. | Goddess of the sixth | VI |
| (*b*) | Araṇya shashṭhī | .. | Forest sixth | VI |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 | Durgāshṭamī | .. | Durgā's eighth | V |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | Daśaharā or Gaṅgotsava samāptī | .. | End of Daśaharā or Gaṅgā festival | VI |
| 11 | Nirjalaikādaśī | .. | Waterless eleventh | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 (*a*) | Pradosha | .. | Evening fast | V |
| (*b*) | Sāvitrī pūjārambha | .. | Beginning of Sāvitrī worship | VI |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 (*a*) | Vaṭ pūrṇimā or Vaṭ Sāvitrī | .. | Vaṭ tree full moon, or Sāvitrī's Vaṭ day | VI |
| (*b*) | Pūrṇimā | .. | Full moon | |

## JYESHṬHA

| | *Kṛishṇapaksha* | | *Dark half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | — | .. | — | |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 | Saṁkashṭa chaturthī | .. | Difficult fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | — | .. | — | |
| 6 | — | .. | — | |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 | Kālāshṭamī | .. | Black eighth | V |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | Ambuvāchyārambha | .. | Beginning of Mother Earth's impurity | VI |
| 11 | Yoginyekādaśī | .. | Austere eleventh | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 (*a*) | Śivarātri | .. | Śiva's night | V |
| (*b*) | Ambuvāchī samāpti | .. | End of Mother Earth's impurity | VI |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 (*a*) | Vaṭ Sāvitrī (N. India) | .. | Sāvitrī's Vaṭ day | VI |
| (*b*) | Amāvāsyā | .. | New moon | |

## ĀSHĀḌHA

| | *Śuklapaksha* | | *Light half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | — | .. | — | |
| 2 | Ratha yātrā | .. | Chariot festival | V |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 | Vināyakī chaturthī | .. | Vināyaka's fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | — | .. | — | |
| 6 | — | .. | — | |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 | Durgāshṭamī | .. | Durgā's eighth | V |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | Punaryātrā | .. | Chariot return festival | V |
| 11 (*a*) | Chaturmāsārambha | .. | Beginning of the Four Months | II, V |
| (*b*) | Śayanyekādaśī | .. | Sleeping eleventh | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 (*a*) | Pradosha | .. | Evening fast | V |
| (*b*) | Bendūra | .. | Cattle festival | VI |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 (*a*) | Vyāsa pūjā | .. | Vyāsa worship | VI |
| (*b*) | Pūrṇimā | .. | Full moon | |

## ĀSHĀḌHA

| | *Kṛishṇapaksha* | | *Dark half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | — | .. | — | |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 | Saṁkashṭa chaturthī | .. | Difficult fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | Manasā pañchamī | .. | Manasā's fifth | VI |
| 6 | — | .. | — | |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 | Kālāshṭamī | .. | Black eighth | V |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | Ambuvāchyārambha | .. | Beginning of Mother Earth's impurity | VI |
| 11 | Kāmikaikādaśī | .. | Wish-granting eleventh | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 (*a*) | Śivarātri | .. | Śiva's night | V |
| (*b*) | Ambuvāchī samāpti | .. | End of Mother Earth's [impurity | VI |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 (*a*) | Dīpa pūjā | .. | Lamp worship | VI |
| (*b*) | Amāvāsyā | .. | New moon | |

## ŚRĀVAṆA

| | Śuklapaksha | | Light half | Chap. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | — | .. | — | |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 | Vināyakī chaturthī | .. | Vināyaka's fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | Nāga pañchamī | .. | Snakes' fifth | VI |
| 6 | Kalki jayantī | .. | Kalki's birthday | V |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 | Durgāshṭamī | .. | Durgā's eighth | V |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | — | .. | — | |
| 11 (*a*) | Putradaikādaśī | .. | Son-giving eleventh | V |
| (*b*) | Jhulāna or Hindola yātrārambha | .. | Beginning of the swinging festival | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 | Pradosha | .. | Evening fast | V |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 (*a*) | Nāraḷī pūrṇimā | .. | Cocoanut full moon | III |
| (*b*) | Jhulāna yātrā samāpti | | End of swinging festival | V |
| (*c*) | Śrāvaṇī | .. | Renewing of cord | VI |
| (*d*) | Pavitrāropaṇa | .. | Worship of threads | VI |
| (*e*) | Rakshā or Rākhi bandhana | .. | Tying on lucky threads | VI |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| All Sundays, | worship of | the Sun | .. | IV |
| ,, Mondays, | ,, | Śiva | | IV |
| ,, Tuesdays, | ,, | Gaurī | .. | IV |
| ,, Wednesdays, | ,, | Mercury | | IV |
| ,, Thursdays, | ,, | Jupiter | .. | IV |
| ,, Fridays, | ,, | Venus or Lakshmī | | IV |
| ,, Saturdays, | ,, | Saturn or Hanumān | .. | IV |

## ŚRĀVAṆA

| | *Kṛishṇapaksha* | | *Dark half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | — | .. | — | |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 (*a*) | Saṁkashṭa chaturthī | .. | Difficult fourth | IV, V |
| (*b*) | Govatsa and Bahulā chaturthī | .. | Cow and calf worship | VI |
| 5 | — | .. | — | |
| 6 | — | .. | — | |
| 7 | Śītalā saptamī | .. | Śītalā's seventh | VI |
| 8 (*a*) | Kālāshṭamī | .. | Black eighth | V |
| (*b*) | Kṛishṇa jayantī Gokulāshṭamī, or Janmāshṭamī | .. | Kṛishṇa's birthday, Gokula or Birth eighth | V |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | — | .. | .. | |
| 11 | Ajaikādaśī | .. | Illusion eleventh | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 | Sivarātri | .. | Śiva's night | V |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 (*a*) | Piṭhorī | .. | Flour-image day | VI |
| (*b*) | Poḷā | .. | Cattle holiday | VI |
| (*c*) | Amāvāsyā | .. | New moon | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| All Sundays | worship of the | Sun | IV |
| ,, Mondays | ,, ,, | Śiva | IV |
| ,, Tuesdays | ,, ,, | Gaurī | IV |
| ,, Wednesdays | ,, ,, | Mercury | IV |
| ,, Thursdays | ,, ,, | Jupiter | IV |
| ,, Fridays | ,, ,, | Venus and Lakshmī | IV |
| ,, Saturdays | ,, ,, | Saturn and Hanumān | IV |

## BHĀDRAPADA

| | *Śuklapaksha* | | *Light half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Maunya vrata | .. | Silent worship | V |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 (*a*) | Varāha jayantī | .. | Boar birthday | V |
| (*b*) | Haritālikā | .. | Pārvatī's festival | VI |
| 4 (*a*) | Vināyakī chaturthī | .. | Vināyaka's fourth | IV, V |
| (*b*) | Gaṇeśa chaturthī or Dagaḍī chauthā | .. | Gaṇeśa's or Stoning fourth | IV |
| 5 | Ṛishi pañchamī or Prāyaśchit | .. | Ṛishi's fifth or Atonement | IV |
| 6 | — | .. | — | |
| 7 | Gauryāvāhana saptamī | | Gaurī summoning seventh | III |
| 8 (*a*) | Durgāshṭamī | .. | Durgā's eighth | V |
| (*b*) | Gaurī pūjā | .. | Gaurī worship | III |
| (*c*) | Dūrvāshṭamī | .. | Dūrvā grass eighth | III |
| (*d*) | Rādhāshṭamī | .. | Rādhā's eighth | VI |
| 9 | Gaurī visarjana navamī | | Gaurī dismissing ninth | III |
| 10 | — | .. | — | |
| 11 | Parivartinī or Pārśvaikādaśī | .. | Turning eleventh | V |
| 12 | Vāmana jayantī | .. | Vāmana's birthday | V |
| 13 | Pradosha | .. | Evening fast | V |
| 14 | Ananta chaturdaśī | .. | Ananta's fourteenth | VI |
| 15 | Pūrṇimā | .. | Full moon | |

All Thursdays, worship of Lakshmī (Bengal)
,, Fridays, ,, ,, (Mahārāshṭra)

## BHĀDRAPADA

| | *Kṛishṇapaksha* | | *Dark half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Mahālaya or Aparapaksha | .. | Abode of Spirits or Unequalled Half | VI |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 (*a*) | Saṁkashṭa chaturthī | .. | Difficult fourth | IV, V |
| (*b*) | Chauthā Bharaṇī | .. | Recently deceased's fourth | VI |
| 5 | Bharaṇī pañchamī | .. | ,, ,, fifth | VI |
| 6 | — | .. | — | |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 | Kālāshṭamī | .. | Black eighth | V |
| 9 | Avidhavā navamī | .. | Unwidowed ninth | VI |
| 10 | — | .. | — | |
| 11 | Indraikādaśī | .. | Indrā's eleventh | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 (*a*) | Śivarātri | .. | Śiva's night | V |
| (*b*) | Dvāpara (or Kali) yugādi | .. | Anniversary of the Dvāpara (or Kali) Yuga | III |
| 14 | Ghāta or Ghāyāla chaturdaśī | .. | Violent death fourteenth | VI |
| 15 (*a*) | Sarvapitṛi | .. | All fathers' day | VI |
| (*b*) | Poḷā | .. | Cattle festival | VI |
| (*c*) | Arandhana | .. | Snake worship | VI |
| (*d*) | Viśvakarmapūjā | .. | Viśvakarmā worship | VI |
| (*e*) | Amāvāsyā | .. | New moon | |

## ĀŚVINA

| | *Śuklapaksha* | *Light half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 (*a*) | Mātāmahā or Dauhitra | Mothers' fathers' day | VI |
| (*b*) | Durgā pūjārambha or Navarātrārambha .. | Beginning of Durgā or nine nights' festival | III |
| 2 | — .. | — | |
| 3 | — .. | — | |
| 4 | Vināyakī chaturthī .. | Vināyaka's fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | Lalitā or Upāṅgalalitā pūjā .. | Lalitā worship | III |
| 6 | — | — | |
| 7 | Sarasvatyāvāhana .. | Sarasvatī summoning | III |
| 8 (*a*) | Durgāshṭamī .. | Durgā's eighth | V |
| (*b*) | Sarasvatī pūjā .. | Sarasvatī worship | III |
| 9 | Sarasvatī visarjana .. | Sarasvatī dismissal | III |
| 10 (*a*) | Durgā pūjā samāpti .. | End of Durgā worship | III |
| (*b*) | Dasarā or Vijayā daśamī | Dasarā or Victory tenth | III |
| (*c*) | Bauddha jayantī .. | Buddha's birthday | V |
| 11 | Pāśānkuśaikādaśı .. | Noose and goad eleventh | V |
| 12 | — .. | — | |
| 13 | Pradosha .. | Evening fast | V |
| 14 | Ananta chaturdaśī .. | Ananta's fourteenth | VI |
| 15 (*a*) | Kojāgarī pūrṇimā .. | First fruits' full moon | III |
| (*b*) | Pūrṇimā .. | Full moon | |

## ĀŚVINA

| | *Kṛishṇapaksha* | | *Dark half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | — | .. | — | |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 | Saṁkashṭa chaturthī | .. | Difficult fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | — | .. | — | |
| 6 | — | .. | — | |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 | Kālāshṭamī | .. | Black eighth | V |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | — | .. | — | |
| 11 | Ramaikādaśī | .. | Joy eleventh | V |
| 12 (*a*) | Govatsa dvādaśī | .. | Cow and calf twelfth | VI |
| (*b*) | Guru ,, | .. | Teacher-worshipping twelfth | VI |
| 13 (*a*) | Dhana trayodaśī | .. | Wealth thirteenth | III |
| (*b*) | Śivarātri | .. | Śiva's night | V |
| 14 (*a*) | Naraka or Bhūta chaturdaśī | .. | Hell or Demon fourteenth | III |
| (*b*) | Govardhana ,, | .. | Govardhana fourteenth | V |
| 15 (*a*) | Lakshmī pūjā | .. | Lakshmī worship | III |
| (*b*) | Arandhana | .. | Snake worship | VI |
| (*c*) | Amāvāsyā | .. | New moon | |

Gajagaurī vrata occurs during the latter half of Āśvina (see p. 43).

## KĀRTTIKA

| | *Śuklapaksha* | *Light half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 (*a*) | Dīpāvalī or Bali pratipadā .. | Lamp festival or Bali first | III |
| (*b*) | Govardhana pratipadā | Govardhana first | V |
| (*c*) | Bendūra .. | Cattle festival | VI |
| 2 | Bhaūbīja or Yama dvitīyā .. | Brothers' or Yama's second | III |
| 3 | — .. | — | |
| 4 | Vināyakī chaturthī .. | Vināyaka's fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | Skanda or Kārttikeya pañchamī .. | Skanda's or Kār. fifth | V |
| 6 | Chhaṭ pūjā (Bihar) .. | Sun worship | III |
| 7 | — .. | — | |
| 8 (*a*) | Durgāshṭamī .. | Durgā's eighth | V |
| (*b*) | Gopāshṭamī .. | Cows' eighth | VI |
| 9 (*a*) | Tretā (or Satya) yugādi .. | Anniversary of Treta or Satya yuga | III |
| (*b*) | Jagaddhātrī or Jagadambā (Bengal) | World-mother's day | VI |
| (*c*) | Kushmāṇḍa navamī (Māhārashṭra) .. | Gourd ninth | |
| 10 | Rāsa yātrārambha .. | Beginning of Rāsa festival | V |
| 11 | Prabodhinyekādaśī .. | Awaking eleventh | V |
| 12 (*a*) | Tulasī vivāha .. | Tulasī wedding | VI |
| (*b*) | Chaturmāsa samāpti .. | End of the Four Months | V |
| 13 | Pradosha .. | Evening fast | V |
| 14 | Vaikuṇṭha chaturdaśī | Vishṇu's heaven fourteenth | V |
| 15 (*a*) | Rāsa yātrā samāpti .. | End of Rāsa festival | V |
| (*b*) | Tripurī pūrṇimā .. | Tripurī's full moon | V |
| (*c*) | Harihara yātrā .. | Vishṇu-Śiva festival | V |
| (*d*) | Vyāsa pūjā .. | Vyāsa worship | VI |
| (*e*) | Itu pūjārambha .. | Beginning of Itu worship | III |
| (*f*) | Pūrṇimā .. | Full moon | |

On all Sundays, worship of the Sun (Bihar).

## KĀRTTIKA

| | *Kṛishṇapaksha* | | *Dark half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | — | .. | — | |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 | Saṃkashṭa chaturthī | .. | Difficult fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | — | .. | — | |
| 6 | — | .. | — | |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 (*a*) | Kālāshṭamī | .. | Black eighth | V |
| (*b*) | Kālābhairava jayantī | .. | Black Bhairava's birthday | V |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | — | .. | — | |
| 11 | Utpattyekādaśī | .. | Creation eleventh | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 | Sivarātri | .. | Śiva's night | V |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 (*a*) | Kālī pūjā | .. | Kālī worship | VI |
| (*b*) | Skanda or Kārttikeya pūjā | .. | Skanda or Kār. worship | |
| (*c*) | Amāvāsyā | .. | New moon | |

All Sundays, worship of the Sun (Bengal).

## MĀRGAŚĪRSHA

| | *Śuklapaksha* | | *Light half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | — | .. | — | |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 | Vināyakī chaturthī | .. | Vināyaka's fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | Nāga pañchamī | .. | Snakes' fifth | VI |
| 6 | Champā shashṭhī | .. | Champā's sixth | VI |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 | Durgāshṭamī | .. | Durgā's eighth | V |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | — | .. | — | |
| 11 | Mokshadaikādaśī | .. | Release-giving eleventh | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 | Pradosha | .. | Evening fast | V |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 (*a*) | Itu pūjā samāpti | .. | End of Itu worship | V |
| (*b*) | Dattātreya jayantī | .. | Dattātreya's birthday | |
| (*c*) | Pūrṇimā | .. | Full moon | |

All Sundays, worship of the Sun (Bengal)

## MĀRGAŚĪRSHA

| | *Kṛishṇapaksha* | | *Dark half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | — | .. | — | |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 | Saṁkashṭa chaturthī | .. | Difficult fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | — | .. | — | |
| 6 | — | .. | — | |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 (*a*) | Kālāshṭamī | .. | Black eighth | V |
| (*b*) | Ashṭakā | .. | First of the eighth days | VI |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | — | .. | — | |
| 11 | Saphalaikādaśī | .. | Fruitful eleventh | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 | Śivarātri | .. | Śiva's night | V |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 | Amāvāsyā | .. | New moon | |

## PAUSHA

| | *Śuklapaksha* | | *Light half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | — | .. | — | |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 | Vināyakī chaturthī | .. | Vināyaka's fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | — | .. | — | |
| 6 | Champā shashṭhī | .. | Champā's sixth | VI |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 | Durgāshṭamī | .. | Durgā's eighth | V |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | — | .. | — | |
| 11 | Putradaikādaśī | .. | Son-giving eleventh | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 | Pradosha | .. | Evening fast | V |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 | Pūrṇimā | .. | Full moon | |

Makara Saṁkrānti and Pongal occur some time during Pausha III

On all Thursdays, worship of Lakshmī (Bengal)
,, Fridays, ,, ,, (Mahārāshṭra) VI

## PAUSHA

| | *Kṛishṇapaksha* | | *Dark half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | — | .. | — | |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 | Saṁkashṭa chaturthī | .. | Difficult fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | — | .. | — | |
| 6 | — | .. | — | |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 | (*a*) Kālāshṭamī | .. | Black eighth | V |
| | (*b*) Ashṭakā | .. | Second of the eighth days | VI |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | — | .. | — | |
| 11 | Shaṭtilaikādaśī | .. | Six sesamum eleventh | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 | Śivarātri | .. | Śiva's night | V |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 | Amāvāsyā | .. | New moon | |

## MĀGHA

| | *Śuklapaksha* | | *Light half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | — | .. | — | |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 (*a*) | Vināyakī chaturthī | .. | Vināyaka's fourth | IV, V |
| (*b*) | Varadā ,, | .. | Husband (or boon) granting fourth | VI |
| 5 | Srī pañchamī (Bengal) | | Sarasvatī's fifth | III |
| 6 | Śītalā shashṭhī | .. | Śītalā's fifth | VI |
| 7 | Mākarī, Bhāskara or Ratha saptamī | .. | Sun's chariot seventh | VI |
| 8 (*a*) | Durgāshṭamī | .. | Durgā's eighth | V |
| (*b*) | Bhīshmāshṭamī | .. | Bhīshma's eighth | VI |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | — | .. | — | |
| 11 | Jayaikādaśī | .. | Triumphant eleventh | V |
| 12 | Varāha jayantī | .. | Boar birthday | V |
| 13 | Pradosha | .. | Evening fast | V |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 (*a*) | Kali yugādi | .. | Anniversary of Kali yuga | III |
| (*b*) | Pūrṇimā | .. | Full moon | |

MĀGHA

| | *Kṛishṇapaksha* | | *Dark half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | — | .. | — | |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 | Saṁkashṭa chaturthī | .. | Difficult fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | — | .. | — | |
| 6 | — | .. | — | |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 (*a*) | Kālāshṭamī | .. | Black eighth | V |
| (*b*) | Ashṭakā | .. | Third of the eighth days | VI |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | — | .. | — | |
| 11 | Vijayaikādaśī | .. | Victorious eleventh | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 | Mahāśivarātri | .. | Great night of Śiva | V |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 (*a*) | Dvāparayugādi (Mahārāshṭra) | .. | Anniversary of Dvāpara yuga | III |
| (*b*) | Amāvāsyā | .. | New moon | |

## PHĀLGUNA

| | *Śuklapaksha* | | *Light half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | — | .. | — | |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 | Vināyakī chaturthī | .. | Vināyaka's fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | — | .. | — | |
| 6 | — | .. | — | |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 | Durgāshṭamī | .. | Durgā's eighth | V |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | — | .. | — | |
| 11 | Āmalakyekādaśī | .. | Āmalakī eleventh | V |
| 12 | Govinda dvādaśī | .. | Govinda's twelfth | V |
| 13 | Pradosha | .. | Evening fast | V |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 (*a*) | Hoḷī, Hoḷikā or Hutāśanī | | Bonfire festival | III |
| (*b*) | Pūrṇimā | .. | Full moon | |

PHĀLGUNA

| | *Kṛishṇapaksha* | | *Dark half* | *Chap.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Chāṇḍāla sparśa | .. | Touching the untouchables | III |
| 2 | — | .. | — | |
| 3 | — | .. | — | |
| 4 | Saṁkashṭa chaturthī | .. | Difficult fourth | IV, V |
| 5 | Raṅga pañchamī | .. | Colour throwing fifth | III |
| 6 | — | .. | — | |
| 7 | — | .. | — | |
| 8 (*a*) | Kālāshṭamī | .. | Black eighth | V |
| (*b*) | Śītalāshṭamī | .. | Śītalā's eight | VI |
| (*c*) | Ashṭakā | .. | Fourth of the eighth days | VI |
| 9 | — | .. | — | |
| 10 | — | .. | — | |
| 11 | Pāpamochinyekādaśī | .. | Sin-freeing eleventh | V |
| 12 | — | .. | — | |
| 13 (*a*) | Śivarātri | .. | Śiva's night | V |
| (*b*) | Vāruṇī | .. | Bathing festival | VI |
| 14 | — | .. | — | |
| 15 (*a*) | Ghanṭākaraṇa pūjā | .. | Ghanṭakaraṇa worship | V |
| (*b*) | Amāvāsyā | .. | New moon | |

# CHAPTER VIII

## PRINCIPAL RELIGIOUS FAIRS OF MAHĀRĀSHṬRA

RELIGIOUS Fairs and Pilgrimages were apparently unknown in Vedic times. No mention is made of them in the Ṛigveda, nor in the Brāhmaṇas, nor in the Code of Manu, etc. From the time of the Mahābhārata, according to Barth,[1] pilgrimages began to be made. By that time the old animistic belief in spirits dwelling in certain spots had led to the belief that the spots themselves were sacred, or auspicious.

As the local animistic cults were gradually absorbed into Hinduism, so the practice of worshipping local deities, at their respective dwelling places, became a recognised side of the religious life of the Hindus.

Religious fairs at certain noted places attract pilgrims from all over India, *e.g.* that at Hardvāra at the Mesha Saṁkrānti, and those held on Mahāśivarātri at the twelve famous Liṅga shrines; but each province, or racial division, of India has its own fairs, to attend which is not only a pleasure and recreation, but also a duty, productive of religious merit.

A list of some one hundred of the principal fairs held in Mahārāshṭra is subjoined. At all of these the attendance ranges from two thousand up to twenty thousand or more; and some idea may be gathered from the list—which is not by any means exhaustive—of the hold which these religious fairs have on the life of the country.

[1] *Religions of India* (trans. Wood), p. 277.

There are several causes any one or more of which may lead to the institution of a religious fair at a certain place.

(*a*) The spot itself may be noteworthy, as being the source or mouth of a famous river, the peak of an isolated hill, or of the highest hill in a range, etc. In such a case the shrine or temple now found at the site is more modern than the worship offered there, and is usually believed to enshrine the guardian spirit of the spot.

(*b*) The fair may be in memory of some devotee or saint connected with the place. At the present day the saint will be found to be at one of the stages on the road to complete deification.

(*c*) The spot may be the reputed site of an event described in some old legend of the gods. The hero of the legend is then the object of worship.

(*d*) The temple or shrine itself, rather than the site, may be the object of the pilgrimage, as being very old, wealthy, large, or that of a popular deity, etc.

In the following description of places, an indication has been made in each case, to show which cause, or combination of causes has led to the religious fair being held there :

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Adivra | .. | Ratnagiri | District |
| Agāśī | .. | Thāṇa | ,, |
| Akhalkop | .. | Sātārā | ,, |
| Ālandī | .. | Poona | ,, |
| Ambarnāth | .. | Thāṇa | ,, |
| Avāsa | .. | Kolābā | ,, |
| Bāhe | .. | Sātārā | ,, |
| Bahule | .. | ,, | ,, |
| Banpuri | .. | ,, | ,, |
| Bhimsāgiri | .. | Kolhāpūr | State |
| Bhīmaśankar | .. | Poona | District |
| Bhudargad | .. | Kolhāpūr | State |
| Chāndūr | .. | Nāśik | District |
| Chāphal | .. | Sātārā | ,, |
| Chatarsingh | .. | Poona | ,, |
| Chaul | .. | Kolābā | ,, |
| Chinchvad | .. | Poona | ,, |
| Dehu | .. | ,, | ,, |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Devgad (Hareśvar) | .. | Janjira | State |
| Dhāmaukhed | .. | Poona | District |
| Dhom | .. | Sātārā | ,, |
| Doṅgargaon | .. | Ahmadnagar | ,, |
| Ghārāpuri (Elephanta Is.) | .. | Thāṇa | ,, |
| Godchī | .. | Kolhāpūr | State |
| Golgeri | .. | Bījāpūr | District |
| Gudguddāpūr (Devargud) | .. | Dhārvār | District |
| Hingne Khurd | .. | Poona | ,, |
| Hippargi | .. | Bījāpūr | ,, |
| Ilkal | .. | ,, | ,, |
| Jambrug | .. | Thāṇa | ,, |
| Jejurī | .. | Poona | ,, |
| Jotibā's hill | .. | Kolhāpūr | State |
| Kanheri | .. | Thāṇa | District |
| Kaṅkeśvar | .. | Sāṅgalī | State |
| Kārle hill | .. | Poona | District |
| Karmāla | .. | Śolāpūr | ,, |
| Kelśi | .. | Ratnagiri | ,, |
| Kelve | .. | Thāṇa | ,, |
| Khoḍsi | .. | Kolhāpūr | State |
| Kodoli | .. | ,, | ,, |
| Kole | .. | Sātārā | District |
| Kolhāpūr | .. | Kolhāpūr | State |
| Kolvādi | .. | Poona | District |
| Lakshmiśvarī | .. | Miraj | State |
| Mādha | .. | Śolāpūr | District |
| Madhi | .. | Ahmadnagar | ,, |
| Mahābaleśvar | .. | Sātārā | ,, |
| Mahālakshmī hill | .. | Thāṇa | ,, |
| Mahālingpūr | .. | Mudhol | State |
| Māhejī (Chinchkhed) | .. | Khāndesh | District |
| Malanggad | .. | Thāṇa | ,, |
| Māndhardev | .. | Sātārā | ,, |
| Mhāsa | .. | Thāṇa | ,, |
| Mhasvād | .. | Sātārā | ,, |
| Mohol | .. | Śolāpūr | ,, |
| Morgaon | .. | Poona | ,, |
| Naitāla | .. | Nāśik | ,, |
| Nargund | .. | Dhārvār | ,, |
| Narsingpur | .. | Sātārā | ,, |
| Nāśik | .. | Nāśik | ,, |
| Nātepute | .. | Śolāpūr | ,, |
| Nimbdara | .. | Poona | ,, |
| Nirmal | .. | Thāṇa | ,, |
| Nirvangir | .. | Poona | ,, |
| Otur | .. | ,, | ,, |
| Pāl | .. | Sātārā | ,, |
| Paṇḍharpūr | .. | Śolāpūr | ,, |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pāṇḍu Lena | .. | Nāśik | District |
| Pārola | .. | Khāndesh | ,, |
| Pārunde | .. | Poona | ,, |
| Pedhe (Chiplun) | .. | Ratnagiri | ,, |
| Pimpalgaon Budruk | .. | Khāndesh | ,, |
| Prakāsh | .. | ,, | ,, |
| Pura | .. | Poona | ,, |
| Rājāpūr | .. | Ratnagiri | ,, |
| Rañjaṅgaon | .. | Poona | ,, |
| Roti | .. | Poona | ,, |
| Sāhāpūr | .. | Thāṇa | ,, |
| Sājgaon | .. | ,, | ,, |
| Sajjaṅgad (Pārli) | .. | Sātārā | ,, |
| Saṅgameśvar | .. | Bījāpūr | ,, |
| Saṅgameśvar | .. | Khāndesh | ,, |
| Saṅgameśvar | .. | Ratnagiri | ,, |
| Sānkśī | .. | Kolābā | ,, |
| Saptaśring | .. | Nāśik | ,, |
| Sindgi | .. | Bījāpūr | ,, |
| Singnāpūr | .. | Sātārā | ,, |
| Śirāle | .. | ,, | ,, |
| Sonāri | .. | Śolāpūr | ,, |
| Tākāri | .. | Sātārā | ,, |
| Talegaon Dhamdere | .. | Poona | ,, |
| Terdal | .. | Sāṅgalī | State |
| Tilse | .. | Thāṇa | District |
| Tryamdak | .. | Nāśik | ,, |
| Tuljāpūr | .. | Ahmadnagar | ,, |
| Vādi Narsimha | .. | Kolhāpūr | State |
| Vajreśvarī | .. | Thāṇa | District |
| Vani | .. | Nāśik | ,, |
| Velneśvar | .. | Ratnagiri | ,, |
| Vīr | .. | Poona | ,, |

*Adivra* (*d*). A well-known temple to Mahākālī (unusual in Western India), with a fair from Āśvina śukla second to tenth.

*Agāśī* (*a*). Near the mouth of the Vaitarṇa and Sūrya rivers. A fair is held on Kārttika kṛishṇa eleventh at Bhavānīśaṅkara's temple. Bathing at this spot is believed to cure skin diseases.

*Akhalkop* (*c*). A temple of Dattātreya, at this his birthplace, with models of his footprints. There is also a mask which is carried in procession, in a palanquin, at festivals. Fairs are held on Mārgaśīrsha full moon, and on Āśvina kṛishṇa twelfth, and a very special one on Māgha kṛishṇa fifth.

*Ālandī* (*b*). The site of the tomb and temple of Dnyāneśvar, Marāṭhī poet and saint (see Tryambak). A large fair is held on Kārttika kṛishṇa eleventh and pilgrimages are made on every dark eleventh in the year. A tree called Ajānavṛiksha in the temple court is said to have sprung from his staff, and to be the only one of its kind on earth.

*Ambarnāth* (*d*). A very old shrine of Ambareśvar Mahādeva, with an inscription dated Śaka 982 (A.D. 1060). A fair is held on Mahāśivarātri.

*Avāsa* (*d*). A snake festival is held at this noted snake shrine, with dancing, on Kārttika śukla fourteenth. The devotees hold canes tipped with images of snakes.

*Bāhe* (*c*, *d*). A temple of Śrī Rāma Liṅga, interesting as being a former shrine of the Vishṇu-Śiva worshipping Bhāgavatas. The story is that Rāma on his wanderings visited this Śiva shrine, and worshipped the liṅga, since when his name has been associated with Śiva's at the worship there. Fairs are held on Pausha new moon and on Chaitra śukla ninth.

*Bahule* (*d*). A temple of Bahuleśvara Mahādeva, with a liṅga. Fairs are held on Mahāśivarātri and on Śrāvaṇa Mondays.

*Banpuri* (*d*). A temple of Śiva, under the name of Nāikbā. A large fair is held on Āśvina śukla tenth.

*Bhīṁsāgiri* (*d*). A temple to Bhīma, one of the Pāṇḍava brothers. A fair is held from Māgha kṛishṇa thirteenth to Phālguna śukla fifth.

*Bhīmaśaṅkara* (*a*, *c*, *d*). The source of the Bhīma river, and site of one of the twelve liṅgas of India. A large fair is held on Mahāśivarātri. A local legend is to the effect that Śiva was fatigued after his fight with the demon Tripurāsura, and the sweat from his brow became a river, at the request of his devotee Bhīmak, king of Oudha. The place is, however, popularly associated with Bhīma the Pāṇḍava.

*Bhudargad* (*d*). A temple to Bhairava, with a fair from Māgha kṛishṇa first to tenth.

*Chāndūr* (*a*). A hill-fort near Manmād. A fair in honour of Khaṇḍobā is held on Pausha full moon.

*Chāphal* (*b*). A temple to Rāmdās Svāmī (the religious preceptor of Śivājī) and Mārutī. A large fair is held on Chaitra śukla ninth.

*Chatarsiṅgh* (*a*, *b*). A four-peaked hill near Poona. The legend is that a banker used devoutly to make an annual pilgrimage to Saptaśriṅg Devī (q.v.), but when he grew too old to undertake it, the goddess permitted him, and others since him, to worship her on this hill instead; which is done on Āśvina śukla ninth.

*Chaul* (*a*, *d*). A steep hill on the coast, at the mouth of the Kuṇḍalik river. It has been noted for many centuries, certain inscriptions of the second century A.D. referring to it. Near the top is a shrine and image of Dattātreya, and a great fair is held for three days from Mārgaśīrsha full moon.

*Chinchvad* (*b*, *c*). The site of a Gaṇeśa temple which became famous through a devotee named Morobā. For his devotion the god condescended to dwell incarnate in him and his heirs. The line of "Deva" continued for seven generations, the last one dying childless in A.D. 1810. Members of the Deva clan still live here. A fair in honour of the Seven is held from Mārgaśīrsha kṛishṇa sixth to ninth.

*Dehu* (*b*). The birthplace of Tukārām, one of the great Marāṭhā poet saints, who lived in the seventeenth century A.D., and gave his life to the worship and hymning of Viṭhobā, the god at Paṇḍharpūr (q.v.). His spirit is believed still to live in the shrine. A large fair is held on Phālguna kṛishṇa second to fifth. The local Viṭhobā temple is visited on all the twenty-four ekādaśī days in the year.

*Devgad* or *Hareśvara* (*d*). A temple of Kālā Bhairava, where it is believed that all sickness due to evil spirits may be cured. Fairs are held on Mahāśivarātri and on Kārttika śukla eleventh to fifteenth.

*Dhāmankhed* (*d*). A Khaṇḍobā temple, with fairs on Māgha and Chaitra full moons.

*Dhom* (*a*, *d*). Near the source of the Kṛishṇa river. It is full of temples, of which the two chief are to

Mahādeva, whose fair is on Vaiśākha full moon, and to Narsiṁha, whose fair is on the preceding day.

*Doṅgargaon* (*d*). A Mahādeva temple with a fair on the third Śrāvaṇa Monday.

*Ghārāpuri* (*Elephanta Island* (*a*, *d*). An island in Bombay Harbour, with rock temples of Hindu origin. It contains the famous Trimūrti, the three-headed representation of the Hindu triad. A large fair to Śiva is held on Mahāśivarātri.

*Godchi* (*d*). A temple to Vīrabhadra, at which a large fair is held on Mārgaśīrsha full moon, chiefly attended by Liṅgāyats (a Śaiva sect).

*Golgeri* (*d*). A temple to Golalīśvara with a liṅga. A large fair is held from Chaitra full moon to new moon.

*Gudguddāpūr or Devargud* (*c*). This marks the site of the fight between Khaṇḍobā and the giant Malla (see Chap. VI, p. 111). His fifteen-foot bow is still shown in the temple, whose attendants are believed to be the descendants of Khaṇḍobā's dog-attendants, and are called Vāghya. At the two days' fair, held at the Dasarā festival, Āśvina śukla tenth and eleventh, these men bark, and behave as dogs, and are fed from begging bowls placed on the ground. Vows are sometimes paid by childless parents, to devote their children, if given, to Khaṇḍobā's service: a son to become a Vāghya, a girl a Muraḷī or temple woman. (See also under Jejurī.)

*Hingne Khurd* (*d*). A well-known Viṭhobā temple. A fair is held on Āshāḍha śukla eleventh, also on Kārttika śukla eleventh, the beginning and end of the Four Months.

*Hippargi* (*d*). An old temple to Kalmeśvara, reported to have been built by Jamadagni (father of Paraśurāma). A fair is held in Āśvina.

*Ilkal* (*d*). An image of the goddess Bānśaṅkarī in an open shrine. A fair is held on Pausha full moon.

*Jambrug* (*a*). A cave temple dedicated to Gambhīrnāth. Fairs are held on Bhādrapada full moon, and at Dasarā.

*Jejurī* (*d*). A famous place of pilgrimage to two Khaṇḍobā temples. (This god is also known as Bahirobā

Mallāri and Mārtand.) Four large fairs are held annually. It is the centre of the Khaṇḍobā worship in the Deccan, and Vāghya and Muraḷī dedications are made. (See also Gūdguddāpūr.) The four fairs are held on Mārgaśīrsha śukla fourth to seventh, Pausha śukla twelfth to kṛishṇa first, Māgha śukla twelfth to kṛishṇa first, and Chaitra śukla twelfth to kṛishṇa first.

*Jotibā's Hill* (*a*, *c*). A hill near Kolhāpūr. The legend states that Jotibā, a manifestation of Śiva, fought with and defeated two demons, Kolhāsura and Ratnāsura, who lived on this hill and harassed the neighbourhood. On Chaitra full moon a large fair is held, when Jotibā is married to one, Yamāī, in an adjacent temple, the former being represented by a brass image, and the latter by a stone.

*Kanheri* (*a*). Old Buddhist hill caves, not far from Bombay. The two largest figures are now worshipped as Bhīma, one of the five Pāṇḍava brothers. Fairs are held on Kārttika śukla eleventh and on Mahāśivarātri.

*Kaṅkeśvara* (*d*). An old and richly carved temple containing a liṅga. A great fair is held at Pausha full moon, when gods from the neighbouring villages are borne in palanquins to pay their respects to the lord of Kaṅka.

*Kārle* (*a*). A well-known rock temple of Buddhist origin not far from Poona. A figure of Ekvīra Bhavānī is cut in the rock. She is the family goddess of the Koli caste, and is possibly older even than the Buddhist caves, some identify her with the Dravidian goddess Akka Aveyār. Fairs are held on Chaitra śukla eight and fifteenth.

*Karmāla* (*d*). A temple of a goddess called Bhavānī or Ambābāī. A fair is held from Kārttika full moon to kṛishṇa second.

*Kelśī* (*a*). At the mouth of the Kelśī river, near Ratnagiri. There are two temples, to Durgā, and to Śrī Rāmjī, and a fair is held during Chaitra on Rāma ninth.

*Kelve* (*d*). A great festival of Śītalā Devī, whose shrine is here, is held on Vaiśākha full moon. Women whose children have smallpox bring and lay them on the

temple threshold, or a woman will put chains on her hands and feet and circumambulate the temple.

*Khoḍsi* (*d*). A temple to the village god Kshetrapāl and his wife Jogeśvarī. A fair is held in Chaitra.

*Kodoli* (*d*). A temple to the god Dattātreya (rather rare). A small fair is held on Māgha kṛishṇa fifth.

*Kole* (*b*). In the latter part of the eighteenth century A.D., one, Ghadge Bova, lived here, a devotee of Viṭhobā. A Viṭhobā temple was built in Ghadge's memory, and a fair is held on Māgha śukla fifth.

*Kolhāpur* (*d*). Two well-known temples to Viṭhobā and Ambābāī. The former has fairs on Āshāḍha and Kārttika śukla elevenths, and the latter a large one on Āśvina śukla fifth (see Chap. VI, p. 100).

*Kolvādi* (*c*). The site of the shrine to Mhasobā, the buffalo to whom the poet-saint Dnyānobā taught the the Vedas, in order to confound Brāhman enemies. A fair is held on Chaitra śukla eleventh.

*Lakshmīśvara* (*d*). A temple, said to be one thousand years old, to Someśvara. A fair is held on Vaiśākha śukla tenth.

*Mādha* (*d*). A temple to Devī (Pārvatī), a fair is held on Āśvina full moon.

*Madhi* (*b*). The shrine of a Musalmān-Hindu saint, known both as Shāh Ramzān Mahi Savār and as Kānhobā. A great fair in his honour, attended by pilgrims of both religions, is held on Phālguna kṛishṇa fifth.

*Mahābalesvar* (*a*). The source of the Kṛishṇa river Three chief temples are to Mahābaleśvara (Śiva), Kṛishṇābāī (the Kṛishṇa river), and Atibaleśvara (Vishṇu). The two first have special fairs from Māgha kṛishṇa twelfth to eighteenth, and Phālguna śukla first to fifth respectively. Kṛishṇābāī has a second, small, fair from Āśvina śukla first to tenth. Also she has a special and great fair in Kanyāgata year, on the entry of Jupiter into the sign Virgo.

*Mahālakshmī Hill* (*a*). A temple to Lakshmī is at the foot of the hill, which is almost inaccessible. A fifteen days' fair is held from Chaitra full to new moon. On the full moon night the temple priest, who is also the head-

man of the village, climbs the hill by a way known only to himself and his heir, and fixes a flag staff on the top.

*Mahāliṅgpūr* (*d*). A temple to Mahāliṅgeśvara. A large fair is held from Bhādrapada śukla tenth to full moon.

*Māhejī* or *Chinchkhed* (*b*). A Kumbī woman saint, named Māhejī, living early in the seventeenth century A.D., is reported to have buried herself alive at this place. A temple has been built in her honour. A fair is held on Pausha full moon.

*Malaṅggad* (*a*, *b*). A large rock-hill, not far from Bombay, called from its shape the "Cathedral Rock." The tomb of a Musalmān saint, named Hāji Abd-ul-Rehmān, is on the hill. A fair is held on Māgha full moon.

*Māndhardev* (*d*). A very old temple to Kālubāī, the patron deity of the village. Her two silver masks are carried in procession at her fair on Pausha full moon.

*Mhāsa* (*d*). A shrine of Khāmba liṅga. A fair, which is said to be the oldest in the district, is held from Pausha full to new moon.

*Mhasvād* (*d*). A temple of Śidnāth and his wife Jogāī. A large fair is held on Mārgaśīrsha śukla first, when masks of the two are driven in a car procession.

*Mohol* (*d*). A temple to Nīlkaṇṭheśvara. A fair is held from Vaiśākha śukla fourth to sixth.

*Morgaon* (*b*, *c*). The original temple of Gaṇeśa, where he was worshipped by Morobā, until Gaṇeśa came to live with him at Chinchvad (see p. 153). A fair is held from Bhādrapada śukla fourth to Āśvina śukla tenth.

*Naitāla* (*d*). A temple to Mātobā. A fair is held from Pausha śukla fourteenth to kṛishṇa fourth.

*Nargund* (*d*). A temple to Veṅkateśā. A large fair is held from Āśvina full moon to kṛishṇa eleventh.

*Narsiṅgpūr* (*a*). The junction of the Bhīma and Nira rivers. There is a temple to Lakshmī. A fair is held on Vaiśākha śukla fourteenth and fifteenth.

*Nāśik* (*a*, *c*, *d*). This is a place of pilgrimage owing to several causes.

(i) It is near the source of the Godāvarī river. The river goddess has a fair at Gorā Rāma's temple on Jyeshṭha śukla tenth.

(ii) The present Kālā Rāma temple is built on the supposed site of the forest dwelling of Rāma, Lakshmaṇa, and Sītā, from which the last named was carried off by Rāvaṇa.

*Note.*—The Mārkaṇḍeya (LVII, 34, 35), Vāyu (XLV, 112-114), and Matsya (CXII, 37-39) Purāṇas identify Pañchavaṭī with the modern Nāśik.

A great fair, with car procession, is held on Rāma jayantī, Chaitra śukla ninth to eleventh.

(iii) It has a noted temple to Tilbhāndeśvara. Fairs are held at it on Mahāśivarātri, and on Vaikuṇṭha fourteenth (Kārttika śukla fourteenth).

(iv) There is a temple to Someśvara on the Godāvarī, a few miles above the town, at which a fair is held on every Monday in Śrāvaṇa.

*Nātepute* (*d*). Two old temples to Gaurīśaṅkara and Pārvatīśvara. Pilgrims en route to or from Śiṅgnāpur (q.v.), attend a fair held at Gaurīśaṅkara's temple on Chaitra śukla eighth.

*Nimbdari* (*d*). A shrine to Renukā Devī, mother of Paraśurāma, an unusual object of worship. A fair in her honour is held on Chaitra full moon.

*Nirmal* (*a*, *b*). Tradition says that the death (in the ninth century A.D.) of Śaṅkarāchārya occurred here. But since he is known to have died in Kashmīr, and some twenty-seven followers have assumed his name during the subsequent six hundred and fifty years, in all probability one of these is commemorated.

Nirmal lake is mentioned in the Skanda Purāṇa as being a holy place of pilgrimage. A fair is held from Kārttika kṛishṇa eleventh to Mārgaśīrsha śukla third.

*Nirvaṅgir* (*c*). Once, when Mahādeva and his bull Nandī were on their way to the shrine at Śiṅgnāpur (q.v.), they stayed for rest at Nirvaṅgir. Nandī so liked the spot that after having visited Śiṅgnāpūr he returned there to live. This is the local legend, and all pilgrims on their way to Śiṅgnāpūr must pause here

to make obeisance to Nandī's image. They pass through about Chaitra śukla fourth.

*Otur* (*d*). A temple to Kapardikeśvara. A fair is held on the last Monday of Śrāvaṇa.

*Pāl* (*d*). A well-known temple of Khaṇḍobā. A great fair is held from Pausha śukla twelfth to full moon, when the marriage of the god is celebrated.

*Paṇḍharpur* (*b*, *c*, *d*). One of the most famous shrines in Western India, and centre of the worship of Viṭhobā (the name is supposed to be a corruption of Vishṇu) regarded as Kṛishṇa. The image is very old, inscriptions show that it was known and reverenced in the thirteenth century A.D. The legend goes that a worshipper of Kṛishṇa, a man named Puṇḍalīk, was so devoted to his aged parents that once, when Kṛishṇa himself came to visit him, he kept the god waiting while he attended to his father's wants. This piety so greatly pleased Kṛishṇa that he took up his abode permanently in the Viṭhobā image. There seems little doubt that Viṭhobā worship was first established by one Puṇḍalīk. It became the centre of the Bhakti revival from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries A.D., and celebrated for the poet-saints who wrote in praise of the god (see Ālandi, Dehu, etc.). Though now this shrine is considered a Vaishṇava one entirely, it was at one time certainly a shrine of the Vishṇu-Śiva worshipping Bhāgavata sect, the high crown on the head of the image being a Śiva liṅga.

Two great fairs are held, at the beginning and end of the Four Months, *i.e.* from Āshāḍha śukla tenth to full moon, and Kārttika śukla tenth to full moon. Also a fair is held on Dasarā night, Āśvina śukla tenth, when torchlight processions are held, and devotees dance on a large slab (रंगशिळा) before Viṭhobā.

There is also a temple to Puṇḍalīk, who is considered divine. A fair in his honour is held on Mārgaśīrsha kṛishṇa tenth to new moon.

*Pāṇḍu Lena* (*a*). Rock caves of Buddhist origin, near Nāśik, now the centre of the cult of the worship of the five Pāṇḍava brothers. The largest Buddha figure in the

caves is worshipped under name of Dharmarāja. A large fair is held during Śrāvaṇa, pilgrims visiting the caves on each Monday of the month, especially on the third.

*Pārola* (*d*). A temple containing an image of Gaṇeśa and attendant devī, know as Jhapāta Bhāva's temple. A fair is held during Vaiśākha.

*Pārunde*(*d*). A shrine of Śrī Brahmanāth Deva (very rare). A fair is held on Āshāḍha kṛishṇa eleventh.

*Pedhe* or *Chiplun* (*c*). This is the supposed site of Paraśurāma's driving back the sea (see Chap. V, p. 78). He has a temple here, and is the patron god of the Chitpāvana Brāhmans. A fair is held on Akshayya tritīyā, Vaiśākha śukla third.

*Pimpalgaon Budruk* (*d*). A very fine old Harihareśvara temple, to Vishṇu (Hari) and Śiva (Hara). Another relic of the Vishṇu-Śiva worshipping Bhāgavata sect. A fair is held during Pausha.

*Prakāsh* (*d*). On the Gomī river. A temple to Gautameśvara Mahādeva (rare), a fair is held during the Siṁhastha year.

*Pura* (*a*). At the source of the Kukdi river. A temple of Kukdeśvara with a liṅga is there, and the copper mask of a man's face used at festivals. A fair is held on Mahāśivarātri.

*Rājāpur* (*d*). A Viṭhobā temple. Fairs are held on his special days, *viz.* Āshāḍha and Kārttika śukla elevenths.

*Rāñjaṅgaon* (*d*). A well-know temple to Gaṇeśa. A fair is held on his special day, *viz.* Bhādrapada śukla fourth.

*Roti* (*d*). A temple to Tukāī Devī. A fair is held on Māgha śukla ninth.

*Shāhāpur* (*d*). The real site of the fair is the village Wāphe, half a mile away, with a holy tank and temples to Mārutī, Tryambakeśvara, and Bhavānīśaṅkara. Fairs are held at Mahāśivarātri and Hoḷī.

*Sājgaon* (*b*). A legend says that a devotee of Viṭhobā, living at this place, grew too old to make his former annual pilgrimage to Paṇḍharpur, but the god appeared to him in a dream, and said he might also be found at Sājgaon. The devotee therefore built a Viṭhobā

shrine, and a fair is held there from Kārttika śukla tenth to kṛishṇa tenth.

*Sajjaṅgad* or *Pārli* (*a*, *b*). A hill fort near Sātārā, and residence of Rāmdās Svāmī, the famous preceptor of the Marāṭhā chief Śivājī. It is said that if a message was received by him summoning him to Sātārā, he covered the distance, about six miles, in a single stride. His fair is held from Māgha kṛishṇa first to tenth.

*Saṅgameśvara* (*Bījāpūr*) (*a*, *d*). At the junction of the Malprabhā and Kṛishṇa rivers. A temple here is noted for having an image of Śiva (very rare), as well as a liṅga, both of which are worshipped. A fair is held on Mahāśivarātri.

*Saṅgameśvara* (*Khāndesh*) (*a*). At the junction of the Gadād and Aruṇāvati rivers. A Mahādeva temple. A fair is held on Mahāśivarātri.

*Saṅgameśvara* (*Ratnagiri*) (*a*). At the junction of the Śāstrī, Alkandā, and Varuṇa rivers. A fair is held on Māgha new moon.

*Sāṅkśī Fort* or *Badr-ud-dīn Killā* (*a*, *b*). The legend is that a Musalmān saint, named Badr-ud-dīn, came from Mecca with some follows in the twelfth century A.D., and captured the fort. An annual fair in his memory is held on Pausha full moon and the following week.

*Saptaśriṅg* (*a*). A high many-peaked hill not far from Nāśik. The presiding deity is known as Saptaśriṅgiṇīvāsinī Devī. Her fair is held from Chaitra full moon to kṛishṇa seventh. The headman of Burigaon village, at the foot of the hill, climbs to an almost inaccessible peak on the night of the full moon, and plants a flag (see Mahālakshmī hill).

*Sindgī* (*d*). A five days' fair is held here at the time of the Makara Saṁkrānti, at which time the marriage of Saṅgameśvara and Pārvatī is performed, the two being represented by the village Accountant (a Brāhman), and the Headman (a Liṅgāyat).

*Siṅgnāpūr* (*d*). A famous place of pilgrimage to a large Mahādeva temple. The god's mask is carried in procession at the fair, which is held on Mahāśivarātri, and also from Chaitra śukla fifth to fifteenth.

*Śirāle* (*a*). The site of a gigantic tamarind tree, the trunk of which is scored with lines and cracks. By the side of the tree has been built a temple to Gorakhnāth, a manifestation of Śiva, who is supposed to have stuck a stick in the ground, from which the tree sprung, and to have afterwards scored it with writing in an unknown tongue. A fair is held from Chaitra kṛishṇa eleventh to new moon.

This is also a centre for snake worship. A fair is held on Nāga pañchamī, when snakes are caught and worshipped, afterwards being set free.

On the following day, *i.e.* Śrāvaṇa śukla sixth, a fair is held in memory of a banker, Śirāla Śeṭa, once king for one and a quarter hours. An earthen image of him is made and worshipped, women dancing round it. It is then thrown into a tank or well.

*Sonāri* (*d*). A temple of Bhairavanāth. A fair is held from Chaitra kṛishṇa eighth to fifteenth.

*Tākāri* (*a*). A cave temple to Kamalbhairī. A fair is held from Mahāśivarātri for three days. The image is carried in a palki throughout the chief night, in procession.

*Talegaon Dhamdhere* (*b*). An ascetic living in Śivājī's time, named Nāth, lived here. A temple was built to his memory, and a fair is held there on Mahāśivarātri.

*Terdal* (*d*). A temple to Prabhu Svāmī. A fair, attended by members of the Liṅgāyat sect, is held on the last Monday of Śrāvaṇa.

*Tilse* (*d*). A temple with a natural liṅga. A fair is held for a month, from Mahāśivarātri to Hoḷī.

*Tryambaka* (*a, b, d*). Three causes combine to make this place a noted pilgrimage :

(i) It is the source of the Godāvarī river, and a very large fair is held in Siṁhastha year, on the entry of the planet Jupiter into the sign Leo.

(ii) It is one of the sites of the twelve noted liṅgas of India. Fairs are held at the Śiva temple on Tripurī full moon and on Mahāśivarātri.

(iii) It is the death place of Nivṛittināth, Marāṭhā poet-saint, who lived in the latter part of the thirteenth

century A.D. He and his two brothers, Dnyāneśvara and Sopāndeva, and their sister Muktābāī, are now considered to have been incarnations of Śiva, Vishṇu, Brahmā and Lakshmī.

Models of his footprints are kept in the shrine, and a great fair is held on Pausha kṛishṇa eleventh.

*Tuḷjāpūr* (*a*). One of the Sivanera Hill caves, not far from Ahmadnagar. One of the caves has been taken over for the worship of Bhavānī. A large fair is held on Vaiśākha full moon. A dance peculiar to the place, named the Gondhāla dance, is danced by the temple women. The place does not bear a good name. It is one of the three and a half holy places on which the limbs of Pārvatī fell when her corpse was cut up by Vishṇu's discus.

*Vādi Narsiṁha* (*a*, *b*, *c*). Near the junction of the Kṛishṇa and Pañchgaṅgā rivers. It has a temple to Dattātreya, who is said to have vanished from the world at this spot. The place takes its name from Narsiṁha Sarasvat, a devotee of Dattātreya (some say his incarnation), who lived here for some years in the sixteenth century A.D., and was believed to be able to cure diseases caused by evil spirits. Svāmī Nārayaṇa, the eighteenth century reformer, is also said to have lived here for twelve years.

Fairs are held for a month from Māgha śukla fifth and from Āśvina kṛishṇa twelfth.

*Vajreśvarī* (*a*). On the Tānsa river. There are hot springs here, supposed to be the blood of a demon slain by the goddess of the spot, "the Thunderbolt Goddess." A fair is held during Chaitra.

*Vani* (*a*). Near the foot of Saptaśriṅg hill (q.v.). The hill goddess condescends to be worshipped here by those who, from old age or other infirmity, are unable to climb the hill. The fair is on Chaitra kṛishṇa eighth.

*Velneśvara* (*a*). Near the mouth of the Śāstrī river. A large and famed fair is held on Mahāśivarātri.

*Vīr* (*d*). Near Jejurī. The shrine of Mhaskobā, a local god, whose devotees perform a sword dance before him. The fair is from Māgha full to new moon.

## DATES OF THE AFOREMENTIONED FAIRS

### CHAITRA

| *Light half* | | *Dark half* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4th | Nirvaṅgir | 1st | Vanī |
| 5th | Siṅgnāpūr | | |
| 8th | Kārle | 8th | Sonāri |
| ,, | Nātepute | | |
| 9th (Rāma) | Bāhe | | |
| ,, | Chāphal | | |
| ,, | Kelśi | | |
| ,, | Nāśik | | |
| 11th | Kolvādi | 11th | Śirāle |
| 12th | Jejurī | | |
| 15th (full moon) | Dhāmankhed | 14th | Vajreśvarī |
| ,, | Golgeri | | |
| ,, | Jotibā | | |
| ,, | Mahālakshmī | | |
| ,, | Nimbdari | | |
| ,, | Saptaśriṅg | | Also during the month at Khoḍsi |

### VAIŚĀKHA

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3rd (Paraśu-rāma) | Pedhe | | |
| 4th | Mohol | | |
| 10th | Lakshmīśvarī | | |
| 14th (Nṛisiṁha) | Narsiṅgpūr | | |
| ,, | Dhom | | |
| 15th | ,, | | |
| ,, | Tuḷjāpur | | |
| ,, | Kelve | | Also during month at Pārola |

### JYESHṬHA

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10th | Nāśik | | |

### ĀSHĀḌHA

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10th | Paṅḍharpūr | | |
| 11th (Sāyanī) | Hingne Khurd | 11th | Pārunde |
| ,, | Kolhāpūr | | |
| ,, | Rājapur | | |

## ŚRĀVAṆA

| | *Light half* | *Dark half* |
|---|---|---|
| All Mondays | .. Pāṇḍu Lena | |
| ,, ,, | .. Someśvara | |
| 3rd ,, | .. Doṅgargaon | |
| Last ,, | .. Otur | |
| ,, ,, | .. Terdal | |
| 5th (Nāga Pañchamī) | .. Śirāle | |
| 6th | .. ,, | |

## BHĀDRAPADA

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4th (Gaṇeśa chaturthī) | .. Morgaon | |
| ,, | .. Rāñjaṅgaon | |
| 10th | .. Mahāliṅgpūr | |
| 15th (full moon) | Jambrug | |

## ĀŚVINA

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1st | .. Mahābaleśvara | |
| 2nd | .. Adivra | |
| 5th (Lalitā) | .. Kolhāpūr | |
| 9th (Sarasvatī) | Chatarsiṅgh | |
| 10th (Dasarā) | .. Banpuri | |
| ,, | .. Gudguddāpūr | |
| ,, | .. Jambrug | |
| ,, | .. Paṇḍharpūr .. | 12th .. Akhalkop |
| 15th (full moon) | Mādha .. | 12th .. Vādi Narsiṁha |
| ,, | .. Nargund .. | Also during the month at Hippargi. |

## KĀRTTIKA

| Light half | | | Dark half |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10th. | .. Paṇḍharpūr | | |
| ,, | .. Sājgaon | | |
| 11th (Prabodhini) | Hiṅgne Khurd | | 11th .. Ālandī |
| ,, | .. Kanheri | .. | 11th .. Nirmal |
| ,, | .. Kolhāpūr | .. | 11th .. Agāśī |
| ,, | .. Rājapūr | .. | |
| ,, | .. Devgad | .. | |
| 14th (Vaikuṇṭha) | Nāśik | | |
| ,, | .. Avāsa | | |
| 15th (Tripurī full moon) .. | Tryambaka | | |
| ,, | .. Sājgaon | | |

## MĀRGAŚĪRSHA

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1st | .. Mhasvād | | |
| 4th | .. Jejurī | .. | 6th .. Chinchvad |
| 15th (full moon) | Akhalkop | .. | |
| ,, | .. Godchī | | |
| ,, | .. Chaul | | |

## PAUSHA

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12th | .. Jejurī | .. | 11th .. (Shaṭtila) Tryambaka |
| ,, | .. Pāl | .. | |
| 14th | .. Naitāla | .. | 15th .. (new moon) Bāhe |
| 15th (full moon) | Chāndūr | .. | |
| ,, | .. Ilkal | | |
| ,, | .. Māhejī | | |
| ,, | .. Māndhardev | | |
| ,, | .. Mhāse | | |
| ,, | .. Kaṅkeśvara | | |
| ,, | .. Sāṅkśī Fort | | |

At Makara Saṁkrānti at Sindgī
Also during the month at Pimpalgaon Budruk

## MĀGHA

| *Light half* | | *Dark half* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5th | .. Kole .. | 1st | .. Sajjaṅgad |
| ,, | .. Vādi Narsiṁha | 1st | .. Bhudargad |
| 9th | .. Roti .. | 5th | .. Akhalkop |
| 12th | .. Jejurī .. | 5th | .. Kodolī |
| | | 10th to 13th | .. Ambarnāth |
| | | ,, ,, | .. Sāhāpūr |
| | | ,, ,, | .. Tilse |
| | | ,, ,, | .. Nāśik |
| | | 12th | .. Nirvaṅgir |
| | | 13th and 14th | Paṇḍharpūr |
| | | Mahāśivarātri | Bāhule |
| | | ,, | .. Bhīmsāgiri |
| | | ,, | .. Bhīmaśaṅkara |
| | | ,, | .. Ghārāpurī |
| | | ,, | .. Kanheri |
| | | ,, | .. Mahābaleśvara |
| | | ,, | .. Pura |
| | | ,, | .. Saṅgameśvara |
| | | ,, | .. (Bījāpūr) |
| | | | ,, (Khāndesh) |
| | | ,, | .. ,, (Ratnagiri) |
| | | ,, | .. Śiṅgnāpūr |
| | | ,, | : Tākāri |
| | | ,, | .. Talegaon Dhamd-here |
| | | ,, | .. Tryambaka |
| 15th (full moon) | Dhāmankhed .. | ,, | .. Velneśvara |
| ,, | .. Mallanggad .. | ,, | .. Devgad |
| ,, | .. Vīr | | |

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